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THE SPANISH NUN.

BY

THOMAS DE QUINCY.

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The Spanish Nun THE SPANISH NUN.

Why is it that *adventures* are so generally repulsive to people of meditative minds? It is for the same reason that any other want of law, that any other anarchy, is repulsive. Floating passively from action to action as helplessly as a withered leaf surrendered to the breath of winds, the human spirit (out of which comes all grandeur of human motions) is exhibited, in mere *adventures*, as either entirely laid asleep, or as acting only by lower organs that regulate the *means*, whilst the *ends* are derived from alien sources and are imperiously predetermined. It is a case of exception, however, when even amongst such adventures the agent reacts upon his own difficulties and necessities by a temper of extraordinary courage and a mind of

premature decision. Further strength arises to such an exception, if the very moulding accidents of the life, if the very external coercions, are themselves unusually romantic. They may thus gain a separate interest of their own. And, lastly, the whole is locked into validity of interest, even for the psychological philosopher, by complete authentication of its truth. In the case now brought before him, the reader must not doubt ; for no memoir exists, or personal biography, that is so trebly authenticated by proofs and attestations direct and collateral. From the archives of the Royal Marine at Seville, from the autobiography of the heroine, from contemporary chronicles, and from several official sources scattered in and out of Spain, some of them ecclesiastical, the amplest proofs have been drawn, and may yet be greatly extended, of the extraordinary events here recorded. M. de Ferrer, a Spaniard of much research, and originally incredulous as to the facts, published about seventeen years ago a selection from the leading documents, accompanied by his *palinode* as to their accuracy. His materials have been since used for the basis of more than one narrative, not inaccurate, in French, German, and Spanish journals of high authority. It is seldom the case that French writers err by pro-

licity. They *have* done so in this case. The present narrative, which contains no sentence derived from any foreign one, has the great advantage of close compression; my own pages, after equating the size, being as one to three of the shortest continental form. In the mode of narration, I am vain enough to flatter myself that the reader will find little reason to hesitate between us. Mine, at least, weary nobody; which is more than can be always said for the continental versions.

On a night in the year 1592, (but which night is a secret liable to three hundred and sixty-five answers,) a Spanish “*son of somebody*,” * in the fortified town of St. Sebastian, received the disagreeable intelligence from a nurse that his wife had just presented him with a daughter. No present that the poor misjudging lady could possibly have made him was so entirely useless for any purpose of his. He had three daughters already, which happened to be more by 2x1 than *his* reckoning assumed as a reasonable allowance of daughters. A supernumerary son might have been stowed away; but daughters in excess were the very nuisance of Spain. He did, therefore, what in such cases every proud and lazy Spanish gentleman was apt to do—he wrapped the new

* That is, “*hidalgo*.”

little daughter, odious to his paternal eyes, in a pocket handkerchief ; and then, wrapping up his own throat with a good deal more care, off he bolted to the neighboring convent of St. Sebastian, not merely of that city, but also (amongst several convents) the one dedicated to that saint. It is well that in this quarrelsome world we quarrel furiously about tastes, since agreeing too closely about the objects to be liked and appropriated would breed much more fighting than is bred by disagreeing. That little human tad-pole which the old toad of a father would not suffer to stay ten minutes in his house, proved as welcome at the nunnery of St. Sebastian as she was odious elsewhere. The superior of the convent was aunt, by the mother's side, to the newborn stranger. She therefore kissed and blessed the little lady. The poor nuns, who were never to have any babies of their own, and were languishing for some amusement, perfectly doted on this prospect of a wee pet. The superior thanked the hidalgo for his very splendid present ; the nuns thanked him each and all ; until the old crocodile actually began to cry and whimper sentimentally at what he now perceived to be an excess of munificence in himself. Munificence, in-

deed, he remarked, was his foible, next after parental tenderness.

What a luxury it is sometimes to a cynic that there go two words to a bargain ! In the convent of St. Sebastian all was gratitude,—gratitude (as aforesaid) to the hidalgo from all the convent for his present,—until at last the hidalgo began to express gratitude to *them* for their gratitude to *him*. Then came a rolling fire of thanks to St. Sebastian ; from the superior, for sending a future saint ; from the nuns, for sending such a love of a plaything ; and finally from papa, for sending such substantial board and well-bolted lodgings, “from which,” said the malicious old fellow, “my pussy will never find her way out to a thorny and dangerous world.” Won’t she ? I suspect, son of somebody, that the next time you see “pussy,” which may happen to be also the last, will not be in a convent of any kind. At present, while this general rendering of thanks was going on, one person only took no part in them. That person was “pussy,” whose little figure lay quietly stretched out in the arms of a smiling young nun, with eyes nearly shut, yet peering a little at the candles. Pussy said nothing ; its of no great use to say much when all the world is against you ; but if St. Sebastian had en-

abled her to speak out the whole truth, pussy would have said, “So, Mr. Hidalgo, you have been engaging lodgings for me—lodgings for life. Wait a little. We’ll try that question when my claws are grown a little longer.”

Disappointment, therefore, was gathering ahead; but for the present there was nothing of the kind. That noble old crocodile, papa, was not in the least disappointed as regarded *his* expectation of having no anxiety to waste, and no money to pay on account of his youngest daughter. He insisted on his right to forget her; and in a week *had* forgotten her, never to think of her again, but once.

The lady superior, as regarded *her* demands, was equally content, and through a course of several years; for, as often as she asked pussy if she would be a saint, pussy replied that she would, if saints were allowed plenty of sweatmeats. But least of all were the nuns disappointed. Every thing that they had fancied possible in a human plaything fell short of what pussy realized in racketing, racing, and eternal plots against the peace of the elder nuns. No fox ever kept a hen roost in such alarm as pussy kept the dormitory of the senior sisters; whilst the younger ladies were run off their legs by the eternal wiles, and

had their chapel gravity discomposed, even in chapel, by the eternal antics, of this privileged little kitten.

The kitten had long ago received a baptismal name, which was Kitty : this is Catharine, or Kate, or *Hispanice* Catalina. It was a good name, as it recalled her original name of pussy. And by the way, she had also an ancient and honorable surname, viz., *De Erauso*, which is to this day a name rooted in Biscay. Her father, the *hidalgo*, was a military officer in the Spanish service, and had little care whether his kitten should turn out a wolf or a lamb, having made over the fee simple of his own interest in the little Kate to St. Sebastian, “to have and to hold” so long as Kate should keep her hold of this present life. Kate had no apparent intention to let slip that hold ; for she was blooming as a rosebush in June, tall and strong as a young cedar. Yet, notwithstanding this robust health and the strength of the convent walls, the time was drawing near when St. Sebastian’s lease in Kate, must, in legal phrase, “determine ;” and any *chateaux en Espagne* that the saint might have built on the cloisteral fidelity of his pet Catalina must suddenly give way in one hour, like many other vanities in our own days of Spanish bonds and

promises. After reaching her tenth year, Catalina became thoughtful, and not very docile. At times she was even headstrong and turbulent, so that the gentle sisterhood of St. Sebastian, who had no other pet or plaything in the world, began to weep in secret, fearing that they might have been rearing by mistake some future tigress ; for, as to infancy, *that*, you know, is playful and innocent even in the cubs of a tigress. But *there* the ladies were going too far. Catalina was impetuous and aspiring, but not cruel. She was gentle, if people would let her be so ; but woe to those that took liberties with *her* ! A female servant of the convent, in some authority, one day, in passing up the aisle to matins, *wilfully* gave Kate a push ; and in return, Kate, who never left her debts in arrear, gave the servant for a keepsake a look which that servant carried with her in fearful remembrance to her grave. It seemed as if Kate had tropic blood in her veins, that continually called her away to the tropics. It was all the fault of that “blue, rejoicing sky,” of those purple Biscayan mountains, of that tumultuous ocean which she beheld daily from the nunnery gardens. Or, if only half of it was *their* fault, the other half lay in those golden tales, streaming upwards, even into the sanctuaries of

convents, like morning mists touched by earliest sunlight, of kingdoms overshadowing a new world which had been founded by her kinsmen with the simple aid of a horse and a lance. The reader is to remember that this is no romance, or at least no fiction, that he is reading; and it is proper to remind the reader of real romances in Ariosto or our own Spenser, that such martial ladies as the *Marfisa* or *Bradamant* of the first, and *Britomart* of the other, were really not the improbabilities that modern society imagines. Many a stout man, as you will soon see, found that Kate, with a sabre in hand and well mounted was but too serious a fact.

The day is come, the evening is come, when our poor Kate, that had for fifteen years been so tenderly rocked in the arms of St. Sebastian and his daughters, and that henceforth shall hardly find a breathing space between eternal storms, must see her peaceful cell, must see the holy chapel, for the last time. It was at vespers, it was during the chanting of the vesper service, that she finally read the secret signal for her departure, which long she had been looking for. It happened that her aunt, the lady principal, had forgotten her breviary. As this was in a private scrutoire, she did not choose to send a servant for it, but gave

the key to her niece. The niece, on opening the scrutoire, with that rapidity of eye glance for the one thing needed in any great emergency which ever attended her through life, that *now* was the moment for an attempt which, if neglected, might never return. There lay the total keys, in one massive *trousseau*, of that fortress impregnable even to armies from without. St. Sebastian! do you see what your pet is going to do? And do it she will, as sure as your name is St. Sebastian. Kate went back to her aunt with the breviary and the key, but taking good care to leave that awful door, on whose hinge revolved her whole life, unlocked. Delivering the two articles to the superior, she complained of a headaches, [ah, Kate! what did *you* know of headaches, except now and then afterwards from a stray bullet or so?] upon which her aunt, kissing her forehead, dismissed her to bed. Now, then, through three fourths of an hour Kate will have free elbow room for unanchoring her boat, for unshipping her oars, and for pulling ahead right out of St. Sebastian's cove into the main ocean of life.

Catalina, the reader is to understand, does not belong to the class of persons in whom chiefly I pretend to an interest; but every where one loves energy and indomitable courage. I for my part,

admire not, by preference, any thing that points to this world. It is the child of revery and profounder sensibility, who turns *away* from the world as hateful and insufficient, that engages *my* interest; whereas Catalina was the very model of the class fitted for facing this world, and who express their love to it by fighting with it and kicking it from year to year. But, always, what is best in its kind one admires, even though the kind be disagreeable. Kate's advantages for her *role* in this life lay in four things---viz., in a well-built person and a particularly strong wrist. 2d. In a heart that nothing could appall. 3d. In a sagacious head, never drawn aside from the *hoc age* [from the instant question of life] by any weakness of imagination. 4th. In a tolerably thick shin—not literally; for she was fair and blooming, and decidedly handsome, having such a skin as became a young woman of family in northernmost Spain. But her sensibilities were obtuse as regarded *some* modes of delicacy, *some* modes of equity, *some* modes of the world's opinion, and *all* modes whatever of personal hardship. Lay a stress on that word *some*; for, as to delicacy, she never lost sight of the kind which peculiarly concerns her sex. Long afterwards she told the pope himself, when con-

fessing without disguise her sad and infinite wanderings to the paternal old man, (and I feel convinced of her veracity,) that in this respect, even then, at middle age, she was as pure as is a child ; and as to equity, it was only that she substituted the equity of camps for the polished (but often more iniquitous) equity of courts and towns. As to the third item,—the world's opinion,—I don't know that you need lay a stress on *some* ; for, generally speaking, *all* that the world did, said, or thought, was alike contemptible in her eyes ; in which, perhaps, she was not so *very* far wrong, I must add, though at the cost of interrupting the story by two or three more sentences, that Catalina had also a fifth advantage, which sounds humbly, but is really of use in a world where even to fold and seal a letter adroitly is not the least of accomplishments. She was a *handy* girl. She could turn her hand to any thing ; of which I will give you two memorable instances. Was there ever a girl in this world but herself that cheated and snapped her fingers at that awful Inquisition which brooded over the convents of Spain, that did this without collusion from outside, trusting to nobody but to herself, and what ? To one needle, two hanks of thread, and a very inferior pair of scissors. For

that the scissors were bad, though Kate does not say so in her memoirs, I knew by an *a priori* argument—viz., because *all* scissors were bad in the year 1607. Now, say all decent logicians, from a universal to a particular *valet consequentia*, *all* scissors were bad ; *ergo some* scissors were bad. The second instance of her handiness will surprise you even more. She once stood upon a scaffold, under sentence of death, (but, understand, on the evidence of false witnesses.) Jack Ketch was absolutely tying the knot under her ear ; and the shameful man of ropes fumbled so deplorably that Kate (who by much nautical experience had learned from another sort of “Jack” how a knot *should* be tied in this world) lost all patience with the contemptible artist, told him she was ashamed of him, took the rope out of his hand, and tied the knot irreproachably herself. The crowd saluted her with a festal roll, long and loud, of *vivas*, and this word *viva* of good augury. But stop ; let me not anticipate.

From this sketch of Catalina’s character, the reader is prepared to understand the decision of her present proceeding. She had no time to lose ; the twilight favored her ; but she must get under hiding before pursuit commenced. Consequently she lost not one of her forty-five minutes

in picking and choosing. No *shilly shally* in Kate. She saw with the eyeball of an eagle what was indispensable: some little money, perhaps, to pay the first toll bar of life. So, out of four shillings in aunty's purse, she took one. You can't say *that* was exorbitant. Which of us wouldn't subscribe a shilling for poor Katy to put into the first trouser pockets that ever she will wear? I remember even yet, as a personal experience, that when first arrayed; at four years old, in nankeen trousers,—though still so far retaining hermaphrodite relations of dress as to wear a petticoat above my trousers,—all my female friends (because they pitied me as one that had suffered from years of ague) filled my pockets with half crowns, of which I can render no account at this day. But what were my poor pretensions by the side of Kate's?

Kate was a fine blooming girl of fifteen, with no touch of ague; and, before the next sun rises, Kate shall draw on her first trousers, and made by her own hand; and, that she may do so, of all the valuables in aunty's repository, she takes nothing besides the shilling, *quantum sufficit* of thread, one stout needle, and (as I told you before, if you would please to remember things) one bad pair of scissors. Now she was ready—ready

to cast off St Sebastian's towing-rope—ready to cut and run for port any where. The finishing touch of her preparations was to pick out the proper keys. Even there she showed the same discretion. She did no gratuitous mischief. She did not take the wine cellar key, which would have irritated the good father confessor ; she took those keys only that belonged to *her*, if ever keys did; for they were the keys that locked her out from her natural birthright of liberty. “Show me,” says the Romish casuist, “her right in law to let herself out of that nunnery.” “Show us,” we reply, “*your* right to lock her in.”

Right or wrong, however, in strict casuistry, Kate had resolved to let herself out, and *did* so ; and, for fear any man should creep in whilst vespers lasted and steal the kitchen grate, she locked her old friends *in*. Then she sought a shelter. The air was not cold. She hurried into a chestnut wood, and upon withered leaves slept till dawn. Spanish diet and youth leave the digestion undisordered and the slumbers light. When the lark rose, up rose Catalina. No time to lose ; for she was still in the dress of a nun, and liable to be arrested by any man in Spain. With her *armed* finger (ay ; by the way, I forgot the thimble ; but Kate did *not*) she set to work upon

her amply-embroidered petticoat. She turned it wrong side out ; and, with the magic that only female hands possess, she had soon sketched and finished a dashing pair of Wellington trousers. All other changes were made according to the materials she possessed, and quite sufficiently to disguise the two main perils—her sex and her monastic dedication. What was she to do next ? Speaking of Wellington trousers would remind *us*, but could hardly remind *her*, of Vittoria, where she dimly had heard of some maternal relative. To Vittoria, therefore, she bent her course ; and, like the Duke of Wellington, but arriving more than two centuries earlier, (though *he*, too, is an early riser,) she gained a great victory at that place. She had made a two days' march, baggage far in the rear, and no provisions but wild berries. She depended for anything better, as light-heartedly as the duke, upon attacking, sword in hand, storming, her dear friend's intrenchments, and effecting a lodging in his breakfast room, should he happen to have one. This amiable relative, an elderly man, had but one foible, or perhaps one virtue, in this world ; but *that* he had in perfection : it was pedantry. On that hint Catalina spoke. She knew by heart, from the services of the convent,

a few Latin phrases. Latin!—O, but *that* was charming ; and in one so young ! The grave don owned the soft impeachment, relented at once, and clasped the hopeful young gentleman in the Wellington trousers to his *uncular* and rather angular breast.

In this house the yarn of life was of a mingled quality. The table was good ; but that was exactly what Kate cared little about. The amusement was of the worst kind. It consisted chiefly in conjugating Latin verbs, especially such as were obstinately irregular. To show him a withered, frost-bitten verb, that wanted its preterite, wanted its supines, wanted, in fact, every thing in this world, fruits or blossoms, that make a verb desirable, was to earn the don's gratitude for life. All day long he was marching and countermarching his favorite brigades of verbs—verbs frequentative, verbs inceptive, verbs desiderative—horse, foot, and artillery ; changing front, advancing from the rear, throwing out skirmishing parties ; until Kate, not given to faint, must have thought of such a resource as once in her life she had thought so seasonably of a vesper headache. This was really worse than St. Sebastian's. It reminds one of a French gayety in Thiebault, or some such author, who describes a

rustic party, under equal despair, as employing themselves in conjugating the verb *s'ennuyer*: *Je m'ennuie* *tu t'ennuies*, *il s'ennuit*; *nous nous ennuyons*, &c.; thence to the imperfect—*Je m'ennuyois*, *tu t'ennuyois*, &c.; thence to the imperative—*Qu'il s'ennuye* &c.; and so on through the whole melancholy conjugation. Now, you know, when the time comes that *nous nous ennuyons*, the best course is to part. Kate saw *that*; and she walked off from the don's, (of whose amorous passion for defective verbs one would have wished to know the catastrophe,) and took from his mantel piece rather more silver than she had levied on her aunt. But the don, also, was a relative; and really he owed her a small check on his banker for turning out on his field days. A man if he *is* a kinsman, has no right to bore one *gratis*.

From Vittoria, Kate was guided by a carrier to Valladolid. Luckily, as it seemed at first,—but it made little difference in the end,—here, at Valladolid, were the king and his court; consequently there was plenty of regiments and plenty of regimental bands. Attracted by one of these, Catalina was quietly listening to the music, when some street ruffians, in derision of the gay colors and the form of her forest-made costume, (rascals!

one would like to have seen what sort of trousers *they* would have made with no better scissors,) began to pelt her with stones. Ah, my friends of the genus *blackguard*, you little know who it is that you are selecting for experiments. This is the one creature of fifteen in all Spain, be the other male or female, whom nature, and temper, and provocation have qualified for taking the conceit out of you. This she very soon did, laying open a head or two with a sharp stone, and letting out rather too little than too much of bad Valladolid blood. But mark the constant villainy of this world. Certain alguazils,—very like some other alguazils that I know nearer home,—having stood by quietly to see the friendless stranger insulted and assaulted, now felt it their duty to apprehend the poor nun for murderous violence; and, had there been such a thing as a treadmill in Valladolid, Kate was booked for a place on it without further inquiry.

Luckily, injustice does not *always* prosper. A gallant young cavalier, who had witnessed from his windows the whole affair, had seen the provocation, and admired Catalina's behavior,—equally patient at first, and bold at last,—hastened into the street, pursued the officers, forced them to release their prisoner upon stating the

circumstances of the case, and instantly offered Catalina a situation among his retinue. He was a man of birth and fortune ; and the place offered, that of an honorary page, being not at all degrading, even to a “daughter of somebody,” was cheerfully accepted. Here Catalina spent a happy month. She was now splendidly dressed, in dark-blue velvet, by a tailor that did not work within the gloom of a chestnut forest. She and the young cavalier, Don Francisco de Cardenas, were mutually pleased and had mutual confidence. All went well ; when one evening, but luckily, not until the sun had been set so long as to make all things indistinct, who should march into the antechamber of the cavalier but that sublime of crocodiles, *papa*, that we lost sight of fifteen years ago, and shall never see again after this night ! He had his crocodile tears all ready for use, in working order, like a good industrious fire engine. It was absolutely to Catalina herself that he advanced ; whom, for many reasons, he could not be supposed to recognize . lapse of years, male attire, twilight, were all against him. Still she might have the family countenance , and Kate thought he looked with a suspicious scrutiny into her face as he inquired for the young don. To avert her own face, to announce him to

Don Francisco, to wish him on the shores of that ancient river for crocodiles, the Nile, furnished but one moment's work to the active Catalina. She lingered, however, as her place entitled her to do, at the door of the audience chamber. She guessed already, but in a moment she *heard* from papa's lips, what was the nature of his errand. His daughter Catharine, he informed the don, had eloped from the convent of St. Sebastian—a place rich in delight. Then he laid open the unparalleled ingratitude of such a step. O the unseen treasure that he had spent upon that girl ! O the untold sums of money that he had sunk in that unhappy speculation ; the nights of sleeplessness suffered during her infancy ! the fifteen years of solicitude thrown away in schemes for her improvement. It would have moved the heart of a stone. The *hidalgo* wept copiously at his own pathos. And to such a height of grandeur had he carried his Spanish sense of the sublime, that he disdained to mention the pocket handkerchief which he had left at St. Sebastian's fifteen years ago by way of envelope for "pussy," and which, to the best of pussy's knowledge, was the one sole memorandum of papa ever heard of at St. Sebastian's. Pussy, however, saw no use in revising and correcting the text of papa's remembran-

ces. She showed her usual prudence and her incomparable decision. It did not appear, as yet, that she would be reclaimed or was at all suspected for the fugitive by her father ; for it is an instance of that singular fatality which pursued Catalina through life, that, to her own astonishment, (as she now collected from her father's conference,) nobody had traced her to Valladolid, nor had her father's visit any connection with suspicions traveling in that direction.

The case was quite different. Strangely enough, her street row had thrown her into the one sole household in all Spain that had an official connection with St. Sebastian's. That convent had been founded by the young cavalier's family ; and, according to the usage of Spain, the young man (as present representative of his house) was the responsible protector of the establishment. It was not to the don as harborer of his daughter, but to the don as *ex officio* visitor of the convent, that the hidalgo was appealing. Probably Kate might have staid safely some time longer. Yet, again, this would but have multiplied the clews for tracing her ; and, finally, she would too probably have been discovered ; after which, with all his youthful generosity, the poor don could not have protected her. Too terrific

was the vengeance that awaited an abetter of any fugitive nun ; but above all, if such a crime were perpetrated by an official mandatory of the church. Yet, again, so far it was the more hazardous course to abscond, that it almost revealed her to the young don as the missing daughter. Still, if it really *had* that effect, nothing at present obliged him to pursue her, as might have been the case a few weeks later. Kate argued (I dare say) rightly, as she always did. Her prudence whispered eternally, that safety there was none for her until she had laid the Atlantic between herself and St. Sebastian's. Life was to be for *her* a Bay of Biscay ; and it was odds but she had first embarked upon this billowy life from the literal Bay of Biscay. Chance ordered otherwise ; or, as a Frenchman says with eloquent ingenuity in connection with this story, “Chance is but the *pseudonyme* of God for those particular cases which he does not subscribe openly with his own sign manual.” She crept up stairs to her bed room. Simple are the traveling preparations of those that, possessing nothing, have no imperials to pack. She had Juvenal’s qualification for carolling gayly through a forest full of robbers ; for she had nothing to lose but a change of linen, that rode easily enough under her left arm, leav-

ing the right free for answering any questions of impertinent customers. As she crept down stairs she heard the crocodile still weeping forth his sorrows to the pensive ear of twilight and to the sympathetic Don Francisco. Now, it would not have been filial or ladylike for Kate to do what I am going to suggest ; but what a pity that some gay brother page had not been there to turn aside into the room, armed with a roasted potato, and, taking a sportsman's aim, to have lodged it in the crocodile's abominable mouth ! Yet what an anachronism ! There *were* no roasted potatoes in Spain at that date, and very few in England. But anger drives a man to say any thing.

Catilina had seen her last of friends and enemies in Valladolid. Short was her time there ; but she had improved it so far as to make a few of both. There was an eye or two in Valladolid that would have glared with malice upon her had she been seen by *all* eyes in that city as she tripped through the streets in the dusk ; and eyes there were that would have softened into tears had they seen the desolate condition of the child, or in vision had seen the struggles that were before her. But what's the use of wasting tears upon our Kate ? Wait till to-morrow morning at sunrise, and see if she is particularly in need of pity. What now

should a young lady do—I propose it as a subject for a prize essay—that finds herself in Valladolid at nightfall, having no letters of introduction, not aware of any reason great or small for preferring any street in general, except so far as she knows of some reason for avoiding one or two streets in particular? The problem I have stated, Kate investigated as she went along, and she solved it with the accuracy which she ever applied to *practical* exigencies. Her conclusion was, that the best door to knock at in such a case was the door where there was no need to knock at all, as being unfastened and open to all comers; for she argued that within such a door there would be nothing to steal; so that, at least, you could not be mistaken in the dark for a thief. Then, as to stealing from *her*, they might do that if they could.

Upon these principles, which hostile critics will in vain endeavor to undermine, she laid her hand upon what seemed a rude stable door. Such it proved. There was an empty cart inside—certainly there was; but you couldn't take *that* away in your pocket: and there were five loads of straw; but then of those a lady could take no more than her *reticule* would carry, which perhaps was allowed by the courtesy of Spain. So Kate was

right as to the difficulty of being challenged for a thief. Closing the door as gently as she had opened it, she dropped her person, dressed as she was, upon the nearest heap of straw. Some ten feet farther were lying two muleteers, honest and happy enough, as compared with the lords of the bed chamber then in Valladolid, but still gross men, carnally deaf from eating garlic and onions and other horrible substances. Accordingly they never heard her, nor were aware, until dawn, that such a blooming person existed. But she was aware of *them* and of their conversation. They were talking of an expedition for America, on the point of sailing, under Don Ferdinand de Cordova. It was to sail from some Andalusian port. That was the very thing for *her*. At daylight she woke and jumped up, needing no more toilet than the birds that were already singing in the gardens, or than the two muleteers, who, good, honest fellows, saluted the handsome boy kindly—thinking no ill at his making free with *their* straw, though no leave had been asked.

With these philo-garlic men Kate took her departure. The morning was divine; and, leaving Valladolid with the transports that befitted such a golden dawn, feeling also already, in the very obscurity of her exit, the pledge of her escape,

she cared no longer for the crocodile, or for St. Sebastian, or (in the way of fear) for the protector of St Sebastian ; though of *him* she thought with some tenderness, so deep is the remembrance of kindness mixed with justice. Andalusia she reached rather slowly, but many months before she was sixteen years old, and quite in time for the expedition. St. Lucar being the port of rendezvous for the Peruvian expedition, thither she went. All comers were welcome on board the fleet, much more a fine young fellow like Kate. She was at once engaged as a mate ; and *her* ship, in particular, after doubling Cape Horn without loss, made the coast of Peru. Paita was the port of her destination. Very near to this port they were when a storm threw them upon a coral reef. There was little hope of the ship from the first ; for she was unmanageable, and was not expected to hold together for twenty-four hours. In this condition with death before their faces, mark what Kate did, and please to remember it for her benefit when she does any other little thing that angers you. The crew lowered the longboat, Vainly the captain protested against this disloyal desertion of a king's ship, which might yet, perhaps, be run on shore, so as to save the stores. All the crew, to a man, deserted the captain. You may

say *that* literally ; for the single exception was *not* a man, being our boldhearted Kate. She was the only sailor that refused to leave her captain or the King of Spain's ship. The rest pulled away for the shore, and with fair hopes of reaching it. But one half hour told another tale. Just about that time came a broad sheet of lightning, which, through the darkness of evening, revealed the boat in the very act of mounting like a horse upon an inner reef, instantly filling, and throwing out the crew, every man of whom disappeared amongst the breakers. The night which succeeded was gloomy for both the representatives of his Catholic majesty. It cannot be denied by the greatest of philosophers that the muleteer's stable at Valladolid was worth twenty such ships, though the stable was *not* insured against fire, and the ship was insured against the sea and the wind by some fellow that thought very little of his engagements. But what's the use of sitting down to cry ? That was never any trick of Catalina's. By daybreak she was at work with an axe in her hand. I knew it before ever I came to this place in her memoirs. I felt, as sure as if I had read it, that when day broke we should find Kate hard at work. Thimble or axe, trousers or raft, all one to *her*.

The captain, though true to his duty, seems to have desponded. He gave no help towards the raft. Signs were speaking, however, pretty loudly, that he must do something ; for notice to quit was now served pretty liberally. Kate's raft was ready ; and she encouraged the captain to think that it would give both of them something to hold on by in swimming, if not even carry double. At this moment, when all was waiting for a start, and the ship herself was waiting for a final lurch to say *Good by* to the king of Spain, Kate went and did a thing which some misjudging people will object to. She knew of a box laden with gold coins, reputed to be the King of Spain's, and meant for contingencies in the voyage out. This she smashed open with her axe, and took a sum equal to one hundred guineas, English, which, having well secured in a pillow case, she then lashed firmly to the raft. Now, this, you know, though not "*flotsom*," because it would not float, was, certainly, by maritime law "*jet-som*." It would be the idlest of scruples to fancy that the sea or a shark had a better right to it than a philosopher, or a splendid girl who showed herself capable of writing a very fair octavo, to say nothing of her decapitating in battle several of the king's enemies and recovering the

king's banner. No sane moralist would hesitate to do the same thing under the same circumstances on board an English vessel, though the first lord of the admiralty should be looking on. The raft was now thrown into the sea. Kate jumped after it, and then entreated the captain to follow her. He attempted it ; but, wanting her youthful agility, he struck his head against a spar and sank like lead, giving notice below that his ship was coming.

Kate mounted the raft and was gradually washed ashore, but so exhausted as to have lost all recollection. She lay for hours until the warmth of the sun revived her. On sitting up, she saw a desolate shore stretching both ways—nothing to eat, nothing to drink ; but fortunately the raft and the money had been thrown near her, none of the lashings having given way ; only what is the use of a guinea amongst tangle and seagulls ? The money she distributed amongst her pockets, and soon found strength to rise and march forward. But which *was* forward ? and which backward ? She knew by the conversation of the sailors that Paita must be in the neighborhood ; and Paita, being a port, could not be in the inside of Peru, but of course somewhere on the outside, and the outside of a maritime land must

be on the shore ; so that, if she kept the shore and went far enough, she could not fail of hitting her foot against Paita at last, in the very darkest night, provided only she could first find out which was *up* and which was *down* ; else she might walk her shoes off and find herself six thousand miles in the wrong. Here was an awkward case, all for want of a guide-post. Still, when one thinks of Kate's prosperous horoscope, that, after so long a voyage, *she* only out of the total crew was thrown on the American shore, with one hundred and five pounds in her purse of clear gain on the voyage, a conviction arises that she *could* not guess wrongly. She might have tossed up, having coin in her pocket, *heads or tails?* But this kind of sortilege was then coming to be thought irreligious in Christendom, as a Jewish and heathen mode of questioning the dark future. She simply guessed, therefore ; and very soon a thing happened which, though adding nothing to strengthen her guess as a true one, did much to sweeten it if it should prove a false one. On turning a point of the shore, she came upon a barrel of biscuit washed ashore from the ship. Biscuit is about the best thing I know ; but it is the soonest spoiled ; and one would like to hear counsel on one puzzling point, why it is

that a touch of water utterly ruins it, taking its life, and leaving a *caput mortuum* corpse. Upon this *caput* Kate breakfasted, though *her* case was worse than mine ; for any water that ever plagued me was always fresh : now, *hers* was a present from the Pacific Ocean. She, that was always prudent, packed up some of the Catholic king's biscuit as she had previously packed up far too little of his gold. But in such cases a most delicate question occurs, pressing equally on medicine and algebra. It is this. If you pack up too much, then, by this extra burden of salt provisions, you may retard for days your arrival at fresh provisions : on the other hand, if you pack up too little, you may never arrive at all. Catalina hit the *juste milieu* ; and about twilight on the second day she found herself entering Paita, without having had to swim any river in her walk.

The first thing in such a case of distress which a young lady does, even if she happens to be a young gentleman is to beautify her dress. Kate always attended to *that*, as we know, having overlooked her in the chestnut wood. The man she sent for was not properly a tailor, but one who employed tailors, he himself furnished the materials. His name was Urquiza—a fact of very little

importance to us in 1847, if it had stood only at the head and foot of Kate's little account ; but, unhappily for Kate's *début* on this vast American stage, the case was otherwise. Mr. Urquiza had the misfortune (equally common in the old world and the new) of being a knave, and also a showy, specious knave.

Kate, who had prospered under sea allowances of biscuit and hardship, was now expanding in proportions. With very little vanity or consciousness on that head, she now displayed a really fine person ; and, when dressed anew in the way that became a young officer in the Spanish service, she looked the representative picture of a Spanish *caballador*. It is strange that such an appearance and such a rank should have suggested to Urquiza the presumptuous idea of wishing that Kate might become his clerk. He *did*, however, wish it ; for Kate wrote a beautiful hand ; and a stranger thing is, that Kate accepted his proposal. This might arise from the difficulty of moving in those days to any distance in Peru. The ship had been merely bringing stores to the station of Paita ; and no corps of the royal armies was readily to be reached, whilst something must be done at once for a livelihood. Urquiza had two mercantile establishments—one at Trujillo, to which he

repaired in person, on Kate's agreeing to undertake the management of the other at Paita. Like the sensible girl that we have always found her, she demanded specific instructions for her guidance in duties so new. Certainly she was in a fair way for seeing life. Telling her beads at St. Sebastian's, manœuvring irregular verbs at Vittoria acting as gentleman usher at Valladolid, serving his Spanish majesty round Cape Horn, fighting with storms and sharks off the coast of Peru, and now commencing as bookkeeper, or *commis*, to a draper at Paita,—does she not justify the character that I myself gave her, just before dismissing her from St. Sebastian's, of being a “handy” girl? Mr. Urquiza's instructions were short, easy to be understood, but rather comic; and yet, which is odd, they led to tragic results. There were two debtors of the shop (*many*, it is to be hoped, but two meriting his affectionate notice) with respect to whom he left the most opposite directions. The one was a very handsome lady; and the rule as to *her* was, that she was to have credit unlimited, strictly unlimited. That was plain. The other customer favored by Mr. Uriquiza's valedictory thoughts was a young man, cousin to the handsome lady, and bearing the name of Reyes. This youth occupied in Mr. Urquiza's estimate

the same hyperbolical rank as the handsome lady, but on the opposite side of the equation. The rule as to *him* was, that he was to have *no* credit, strictly none. In this case, also, Kate saw no difficulty ; and, when she came to know Mr. Reyes a little, she found the path of pleasure coinciding with the path of duty. Mr. Urquiza could not be more precise in laying down the rule than Kate was in enforcing it. But in the other case a scruple arose. *Unlimited* might be a word, not of Spanish law, but of Spanish rhetoric ; such as, "*Live a thousand years,*" which even annuity offices hear, and perhaps utter, without a paug. Kate, therefore, wrote to Trujillo, expressing her honest fears, and desiring to have more definite instructions. These were positive. If the lady choose to send for the entire shop, her account was to be debited instantly with *that*. She had, however, as yet, not sent for the shop ; but she began to manifest strong signs of sending for the *shopman*.

Upon the blooming young Biscayan had her roving eye settled ; and she was in a course of making up her mind to take Kate for a sweet-heart. Poor Kate saw this with a heavy heart ; and, at the same time that she had a prospect of a tender friend more than she wanted, she had

become certain of an extra enemy that she wanted quite as little. What she had done to offend Mr. Reyes Kate could not guess, except as to the matter of the credit ; but then, in that, she only executed her instructions. Still Mr. Reyes was of opinion that there were two ways of executing orders ; but the main offence was unintentional on Kate's part. Reyes, though as yet she did not know it, had himself been a candidate for the situation of clerk, and intended probably to keep the equation precisely as it was with respect to the allowance of credit, only to change places with the handsome lady, keeping *her* on the negative side, himself on the affirmative—an arrangement that you know would have made no sort of pecuniary difference to Urquiza.

Thus stood matters, when a party of strolling players strolled into Paita. Kate, as a Spaniard, being one held of the Paita aristocracy, was expected to attend. She did so ; and there, also was the malignant Reyes. He came and seated himself purposely, so as to shut out Kate from all view of the stage. She, who had nothing of the bully in her nature, and was a gentle creature when her wild Biscayan blood had not been kindled by insult, courteously requested him to move a little ; upon which Reyes remaked that it was

not in his power to oblige the clerk as to that, but that he *could* oblige him by cutting his throat. The tiger that slept in Catalina wakened at once. She seized him, and would have executed vengeance on the spot, but that a party of young men interposed to part them. The next day, when Kate (always ready to forget and forgive) was thinking no more of the row, Reyes passed. By spitting at the window, and other gestures insulting to Kate, again he roused her Spanish blood. Out she rushed, sword in hand. A duel began in the street, and very soon Kate's sword had passed into the heart of Reyes. Now that the mischief was done, the police were, as usual, all alive for the pleasure of avenging it. Kate found herself suddenly in a strong prison, and with small hopes of leaving it except for execution. The relations of the dead man were potent in Paita, and clamorous for justice; so that the *corregidor*, in a case where he saw a very poor chance of being corrupted by bribes, felt it his duty to be sublimely incorruptible. The reader knows, however, that amongst the relatives of the deceased bully was that handsome lady, who differed as much from her cousin in her sentiments as to Kate as she did in the extent of her credit with Mr. Urquiza. To her Kate wrote a note,

and using one of the Spanish king's gold coins for bribing the jailer, got it safely delivered. That, perhaps, was unnecessary; for the lady had been already on the alert, and had summoned Urquiza from Trujillo. By some means, not very luminously stated, and by paying proper fees in proper quarters, Kate was smuggled out of the prison at nightfall and smuggled into a pretty house in the suburbs. Had she known exactly the footing she stood on as to the law, she would have been decided. As it was, she was uneasy, and jealous of mischief abroad; and, before supper, she understood it all.

Urquiza briefly informed his clerk that it would be requisite for him to marry the handsome lady. But why? Because, said Urquiza, after talking for hours with the *corregidor* who was infamous for obstinacy, he had found it impossible to make him "hear reason" and release the prisoner until this compromise of marriage was suggested. But how could public justice be pacified for the clerk's unfortunate homicide of Reyes by a female cousin of the deceased man engaging to love, honor, and obey the clerk for life? Kate could not see her way through this logic. "Nonsense, my friend," said Urquiza; "you don't

comprehend. As it stands, the affair is a murder and hanging the penalty ; but, if you marry into the murdered man's house, then it becomes a little family murder, all quiet and comfortable amongst ourselves. What has the *corregidor* to do with that, or the public either ? Now, let me introduce the bride." Supper entered at that moment, and the bride immediately after. The thoughtfulness of Kate was narrowly observed, and even alluded to, but politely ascribed to the natural anxieties of a prisoner and the very imperfect state of liberation even yet from prison *surveillance*. Kate had, indeed, never been in so trying a situation before. The anxieties of the farewell night at St. Sebastian were nothing to this ; because, even if she had failed *then*, a failure might not have been always irreparable. It was but to watch and wait. But now, at this supper table, she was not more alive to the nature of the peril, than she was to the fact, that if, before the night closed, she did not by some means escape from it, she never *would* escape with life. The deception as to her sex, though resting on no motive that pointed to these people or at all concerned them, would be resented as if it had. The lady would resent the case as a mockery ; and Urquiza would lose his opportunity

of delivering himself from an imperious mistress. According to the usages of the times and country, Kate knew that in twelve hours she would be assassinated.

People of infirmer resolution would have lingered at the supper table, for the sake of putting off the evil moment of final crisis. Not so Kate. She had revolved the case on all its sides in a few minutes and had formed her resolution. This done, she was as ready for the trial at one moment as another ; and, when the lady suggested that the hardships of a prison must have made repose desirable, Kate assented, and instantly rose. A sort of procession formed, for the purpose of doing honor to the interesting guest and escorting him in pomp to his bedroom. Kate viewed it much in the same light as the procession to which for some days she had been expecting an invitation from the *corregidor*. Far ahead ran the servant woman as a sort of outrider. Then came Urquiza, like a pacha of two tails, who granted two sorts of credit, viz., unlimited and none at all, bearing two wax lights, one in each hand, and wanting only cymbals and kettledrums to express emphatically the pathos of his Castilian strut. Next came the bride, a little in advance of the clerk, but still turning obliquely towards him and

smiling graciously into his face. Lastly, bringing up the rear, came the prisoner,—our Kate,—the nun, the page, the mate, the clerk, the homicide, the convict; and, for this day only, by particular desire, the bridegroom elect.

It was Kate's fixed opinion, that, if for a moment she entered any bed room having obviously no outlet, her fate would be that of an ox once driven within the shambles. Outside, the bullock might make some defence with his horns; but once in, with no space for turning, he is muzzled and gagged. She carried her eye, therefore, like a hawk's, steady, though restless, for vigilant examination of every angle she turned. Before she entered any bed room, she was determined to reconnoitre it from the doorway, and in case of necessity, show fight at once, before entering—as the best chance, after all, where all chances were bad. Every thing ends; and at last the procession reached the bed room door, the outrider having filed off to the rear. One glance sufficed to satisfy Kate that windows there were none, and, therefore, no outlet for escape. Treachery appeared even in *that*; and Kate, though unfortunately without arms, was now fixed for resistance. Mr. Urquiza entered first. “Sound the trumpets! Beat the drums!” There were, as we know al-

ready, no windows ; but a slight interruption to Mr. Urquiza's pompous tread showed that there were steps downwards into the room. Those, thought Kate, will suit me even better. She had watched the unlocking of the bed-room door—she had lost nothing—she had marked that the key was left in the lock. At this moment, the beautiful lady, as one acquainted with the details of the house, turning with the air of a gracious monitress, held out her fair hand to guide Kate in careful descent of the steps. This had the air of taking out Kate to dance ; and Kate, at that same moment, answering to it by the gesture of a modern waltzer, threw her arm behind the lady's waist, hurled her headlong down the steps, right against Mr. Urquiza, draper and haberdasher ; and then, with the speed of lightning, throwing the door *home* within its architrave, doubly locked the creditor and debtor into the rat trap which they had prepared for herself.

The affrighted outrider fled with horror. she already knew that the clerk had committed one homicide ; a second would cost him still less thought ; and thus it happened that egress was left easy. But, when out and free once more in the bright starry night, which way should Kate turn ? The whole city would prove but a rat trap

for her, as bad as Mr. Urquiza's, if she was not off before morning. At a glance, she comprehended that the sea was her only chance. To the port she fled. All was silent. Watchmen there were none. She jumped into a boat. To use the oars was dangerous, for she had no means of muffling them. But she contrived to hoist a sail, push off with a boat hook, and was soon stretching across the water for the mouth of the harbor before a breeze light but favorable. Having cleared the difficulties of exit, she lay down, and unintentionally fell asleep. When she awoke, the sun had been up three or four hours ; all was right otherwise ; but, had she not served as a sailor, Kate would have trembled upon finding that, during her long sleep of perhaps seven or eight hours, she had lost sight of land, by what distance she could only guess, and in what direction was to some degree doubtful.

All this, however, seemed a great advantage to the bold girl, throwing her thoughts back on the enemies she had left behind. The disadvantage was, having no breakfast, not even damaged biscuit ; and some anxiety naturally arose as to ulterior prospects a little beyond the horizon of breakfast. But who's afraid ? As sailors whistle for a wind, Catalina really had but to whistle for

any thing with energy, and it was sure to come. Like Cæsar to the pilot of Dyrrhachium, she might have said for the comfort of her poor timorous boat, (though destined soon to perish,) “*Catalinam vehis, et fortunas ejus.*” Meantime, being very doubtful as to the best course for sailing, and content if her course did but lie off shore, she “carried on,” as sailors say, under easy sail, going in fact, just whither and just how the Pacific breezes suggested in the gentlest of whispers. *All right behind*, was Kate’s opinion; and, what was better, very soon she might say, *All right ahead*; for, some hour or two before sunset, when dinner was for once becoming, even to Kate, the most interesting of subjects for meditation, suddenly a large ship began to swell upon the brilliant atmosphere. In those latitudes, and in those years, any ship was pretty sure to be Spanish: sixty years later, the odds were in favor of its being an English buccaneer, which would have given a new direction to Kate’s energy. Kate continued to make signals with a handkerchief whiter than the crocodile’s of Ann. Dom. 1592, else it would hardly have been noticed. Perhaps, after all, it would not, but that the ship’s course carried her very nearly across Kate’s. The stranger lay-to for her. It was dark by the time Kate

steered herself under the ship's quarter ; and then was seen an instance of this girl's eternal wakefulness ; something was painted on the stern of her boat, she could not see *what* ; but she judged that it would express some connection with the port that she had just quitted. Now, it was her wish to break the chain of traces connecting her with such a scamp as Urquiza ; since else, through his commercial correspondence, he might disperse over Peru a portrait of herself by no means flattering. How should she accomplish this ? It was dark ; and she stood, as you may see an Etonian do at times, rocking her little boat from side to side until it had taken in water as much as might be agreeable. Too much it proved for the boat's constitution, and the boat perished of dropsy—Kate declining to tap it. She got a ducking herself ; but what cared she ? Up the ship's side she went, as gayly as ever, in those years when she was called pussy, she had raced after the nuns of St. Sebastian, jumped upon deck, and told the first lieutenant, when he questioned her about her adventures, quite as much truth as any man, under the rank of admiral, had a right to expect.

This ship was full of recruits for the Spanish army, and bound for Conception. Even in that

destiny was an iteration or repeating memorial of the significance that ran through Catalina's most casual adventures. She had enlisted amongst the soldiers ; and, on reaching port, the very first person who came off from shore was a dashing young military officer, whom at once, by his name and rank (though she had never consciously seen him,) she identified as her own brother.

He was splendidly situated in the service, being the governor general's secretary ; besides his rank as a cavalry officer ; and, his errand on board being to inspect the recruits, naturally, on reading in the roll one of them described as a Biscayan, the ardent young man came up with highbred courtesy to Catalina, took the young recruit's hand with kindness, feeling that to be a compatriot at so great a distance was to be a sort of relative, and asked with emotion after old boyish remembrances. There was a scriptural pathos in what followed, as if it were some scene of domestic reunion opening itself from patriarchal ages. The young officer was the eldest son of the house, and had left Spain when Catalina was only three years old. But, singularly enough, Catalina it was, the little wild cat that he yet remembered seeing at St. Sebastians, upon whom his earliest inquiries settled. "Did the recruit know his

family, the De Erausos?" O, yes; every body knew *them*. "Did the recruit know little Catalina?" Catalina smiled as she replied that she did, and gave such an animated description of the little fiery wretch as made the officer's eyes flash with gratified tenderness, and with certainty that the recruit was no counterfeit Biscayan. Indeed, you know, if Kate could not give a good description of "pussy," who could? The issue of the interview was, that the officer insisted on Kate's making a home of his quarters. He did other services for his unknown sister. He placed her as a trooper in his own regiment, and favored her in many a way that is open to one having authority. But the person, after all, that did most to serve our Kate, was Kate. War was then raging with Indians both from Chili and Peru. Kate had always done her duty in action; but at length, in the decisive battle of Puren, there was an opening for doing some thing more. Havoc had been made of her own squadron; most of the officers were killed, and the standard was carried off. Kate gathered around her a small party—galloped after the Indian column that was carrying away the trophy—charged—saw all her own party killed—but (in spite of wounds on her face and shoulder) succeeded in bearing away the re-

covered standard. She rode up to the general and his staff ; she dismounted ; she rendered up her prize, and fainted away, much less from the blinding blood than from the tears of joy which dimmed her eyes as the general, waving his sword in admiration over her head, pronounced our Kate on the spot an *alferez*, or standard bearer, with a commission from the King of Spain and the Indies. Bonny Kate ! noble Kate ! I would there were not two centuries laid between us, so that I might have the pleasure of kissing thy fair hand.

Kate had the good sense to see the danger of revealing her sex, or her relationship, even to her own brother. The grasp of the church never relaxed, never “prescribed,” unless freely and by choice. The nun, if discovered, would have been taken out of the horse barracks or the dragoon saddle. She had the firmness, therefore, for many years to resist the sisterly impulses that sometimes suggested such a confidence. For years, and those years the most important of her life,—the years that developed her character,—she lived undetected as a brilliant cavalry officer under her brother’s patronage ; and the bitterest grief in poor Kate’s whole life was the tragical, (and, were it not fully attested, one might say the ultra-scenical) event that dissolved their long

connection. Let me spend a word of apology on poor Kate's errors.

We all commit many—both you and I, reader. No, stop ; that's not civil. You, reader, I know, are a saint ; I am *not*, though very near it. I *do* err at long intervals ; and then I think with indulgence of the many circumstances that plead for this poor girl. The Spanish armies of that day inherited, from the days of Cortez and Pizarro, shining remembrances of martial prowess and the very worst of ethics. To think little of blood-shed, to quarrel, to fight, to gamble, to plunder, belonged to the very atmosphere of a camp, to its indolence, to its ancient traditions. In your own defence, you were obliged to do such things. Besides all these grounds of evil, the Spanish army had just there an extra demoralization from a war with savages faithless and bloody. Do not think, I beseech you, too much, reader, of killing a man. That word "*kill*" is sprinkled over every page of Kate's own autobiography. It ought not to be read by the light of these days. Yet, how if a man that she killed were——? Hush ! It was sad, but is better hurried over in a few words. Years after this period, a young officer one day, dining with Kate, entreated her to become his second in a duel. Such things were every-day af-

fairs. However, Kate had reasons for declining the service and did so ; but the officer, as he was sullenly departing, said, that, if he were killed, (as he thought he *should* be,) his death would lie at Kate's door. I do not take *his* view of the case, and am not moved by his rhetoric or his logic. Kate *was*, and relented. The duel was fixed for eleven at night, under the walls of a monastery. Unhappily the night, proved unusually dark, so that the two principles had to tie white handkerchiefs round their elbows in order to descry each other. In the confusion they wounded each other mortally. Upon that, according to a usage not peculiar to Spaniards, but extending (as doubtless the reader knows) for a century longer to our own countrymen, the two seconds were obliged, in honor, to do some thing towards avenging their principals. Kate had her usual fatal luck. Her sword passed sheer through the body of her opponent. This unknown opponent, falling dead, had just breath left to cry out, “Ah, villain, you have killed me !” in a voice of horrific reproach ; and the voice was the voice of her brother !

The monks of the monastery under whose silent shadows this murderous duel had taken place, roused by the clashing of swords and the angry

shouts of combatants, issued out with torches to find one only of the four officers surviving. Every convent and altar had a right of asylum for a short period. According to the custom, the monks carried Kate, insensible with anguish of mind, to the sanctuary of their chapel. There, for some days, they detained her ; but then, having furnished her with a horse and some provisions, they turned her adrift. Which way should the unhappy fugitive turn ? In blindness of heart, she turned towards the sea, It was the sea that had brought her to Peru ; it was the sea that would, perhaps, carry her away. It was the sea that had first showed her this land and its golden hopes ; it was the sea that ought to hide from her its fearful remembrances. The sea it was that had twice spared her life in extremities ; the sea it was that might now, if it choose, take back the bawble that it had spared in vain.

KATE'S PASSAGE OVER THE ANDES.

Three days our poor heroine followed the coast, Her horse was then almost unable to move ; and, on *his* account, she turned inland to a thicket for grass and shelter. As she drew near to it, a voice challenged, “*Who goes there?*” Kate answered, “*Spain.*” “*What people?*” “*A friend.*” It

was two soldiers, deserters, and almost starving. Kate shared her provisions with these men ; and on hearing their plan, which was to go over the Cordilleras, she agreed to join the party. *Their* object was the wild one of seeking the river *Dorado*, whose waters rolled along golden sands and whose pebbles were emeralds. *Hers* was to throw herself upon a line the least liable to pursuit, and the readiest for a new chapter of life in which oblivion might be found for the past. After a few days of incessant climbing and fatigue, they found themselves in the regions of perpetual snow. Summer would come as vainly to this kingdom of frost as to the grave of her brother. No fire, but the fire of human blood in youthful veins, could ever be kept burning in these aerial solitudes. Fuel was rarely to be found, and kindling a secret hardly known except to Indians. However, our Kate can do every thing ; and she's the girl, if ever girl *did* such a thing, or ever girl did *not* such a thing, that I back at any odds for crossing the Cordilleras. I would bet you something now, reader, if I thought you would deposit your stakes by return of post, (as they play at chess through the post office,) that Kate does the trick ; that she gets down to the other side ; that the soldiers do *not* ; and that the horse, if

preserved at all, is preserved in a way that will leave him very little to boast of.

The party had gathered wild berries and esculent roots at the foot of the mountains, and the horse was of very great use in carrying them. But this larder was soon emptied. There was nothing then to carry; so that the horse's value as a beast of burden fell cent. per cent. In fact, very soon he could not carry himself, and it became easy to calculate when he would reach the bottom on the wrong side of the Cordilleras. He took three steps back for one upwards. A council of war being held, the small army resolved to slaughter their horse. He, though a member of the expedition, had no vote; and, if he had, the votes would have stood three to one—majority, two against him. He was cut into quarters, which surprises me; for, unless *one* quarter was considered his own share, it reminds one too much of this amongst the many *facetiae* of English midshipmen, who ask (on any one of their number looking sulky) “if it is his intention to marry and retire from the service upon a superannuation of £4 4*s.* 4*½d.* a year, paid quarterly by way of bothering the purser.” The purser can't do it with the help of farthings; and, as respects aliquot parts, four shares among three per-

sons are as incommensurable as a guinea against any attempt at giving change in half crowns. However, this was all the preservation that the horse found. No saltpetre or sugar could be had ; but the frost was antiseptic ; and the horse was preserved in as useful a sense as ever apricots were preserved, or strawberries.

On a fire, painfully devised out of broom and withered leaves, a horsesteak was dressed. For drink, snow was allowed *a discretion*. This ought to have revived the party ; and Kate, perhaps, it *did*. But the poor deserters were thinly clad, and they had not the boiling heart of Cata-lina. More and more they drooped. Kate did her best to cheer them. But the march was nearly at an end for *them*, and they were going in one half hour to receive their last billet. Yet, before this consummation, they have a strange spectacle to see, such as few places could show but the upper chamber of the Cordilleras. They had reached a billowy scene of rocky masses, large and small, looking shockingly black on their perpendicular sides as they rose out of the vast snowy expanse. Upon the highest of these that was accessible Kate mounted to look around her ; and she saw—O, rapture at such an hour !—a man sitting on a shelf of rock, with a gun by his side.

She shouted with joy to her comrades, and ran down to communicate the joyful news. Here was a sportsman, watching, perhaps, for an eagle ; and now they would have relief. One man's cheek kindled with the hectic of sudden joy, and he rose eagerly to march. The other was fast sinking under the fatal sleep that Frost sends before herself as her merciful minister of death ; but hearing in his dream the tidings of relief, and assisted by his friends, he also staggeringly arose. It could not be three minutes' walk, Kate thought, to the station of the sportsman. That thought supported them all. Under Kate's guidance, who had taken a sailor's glance at the bearings, they soon unthreaded the labyrinth of rocks so far as to bring the man within view. He had not left his resting-place ; their steps on the soundless snow, naturally, he could not hear ; and, as their road brought them upon him from the rear, still less could he see them. Kate hailed him ; but so keenly was he absorbed in some speculation, or in the object of his watching, that he took no notice of them, not even moving his head. Kate began to think there would be another man to rouse from sleep. Coming close behind him she touched his shoulder, and said, "My friend, you are sleeping?" Yes, he *was* sleeping—sleeping

the sleep from which there is no awaking ; and the slight touch of Kate having disturbed the equilibrium of the corpse, down it rolled on the snow ; the frozen body rang like a hollow iron cylinder, the face uppermost and blue with mould, mouth open, teeth ghastly and bleaching in the frost, and a frightful grin upon the lips. This dreadful spectacle finished the struggles of the weaker man, who sank and died at once. The other made an effort with so much spirit, that, in Kate's opinion, horror had acted upon him beneficially as a stimulant. But it was not really so ; it was a spasm of morbid strength. A collapse succeeded ; his blood began to freeze ; he sat down in spite of Kate ; and he also died without further struggle. Gone are the poor, suffering deserters, stretched and bleaching upon the snow ; and insulted discipline is avenged. Great kings have long arms ; and sycophants are ever at hand for the errand of the potent. What had frost and snow to do with the quarrel ? Yet *they* made themselves sycophantic servants of the King of Spain ; and *they* dogged his deserters up to the summit of the Cordilleras more surely than any Spanish bloodhound or any Spanish tirailleur's bullet.

Now is our Kate standing alone on the summits

of the Andes in solitude that is shocking ; for she is alone with her own afflicted conscience. Twice before she had stood in solitude as deep upon the wild, wild waters of the Pacific ; but her conscience had been then untroubled. Now is there nobody left that can help ; her horse is dead ; the soldiers are dead. There is nobody that she can speak to except God ; and very soon you will find that she *does* speak to him ; for already on these vast aerial deserts he has been whispering to *her*. The condition of Kate is exactly that of Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*. But possibly, reader, you may be amongst the many careless readers that have never fully understood what that condition was. Suffer me to enlighten you, else you ruin the story of the mariner, and, by losing all its pathos, lose half the jewels of its beauty.

There are three readers of the *Ancient Mariner*. The first is gross enough to fancy all the imagery of the mariner's visions delivered by the poet for actual facts of experience ; which being impossible, the whole pulverizes, for that reader, into a baseless fairy tale. The second reader is wiser than *that* ; he knows that that the imagery is *not* baseless ; it is the imagery of febrile delirium, really seen, but not seen as an external reality. The mariner had caught the pestilential fever,

which carried off all his mates ; he only had survived—the delirium had vanished, but the visions that had haunted the delirium remained. “Yes,” says the third reader, “they remained ; naturally they did, being scorched by fever into his brain ; but how did they happen to remain on his belief as gospel truths ? The delirium had vanished ; why had not the painted scenery of the delirium vanished, except as visionary memorials of a sorrow that was cancelled ? Why was it that craziness settled upon this mariner’s brain, driving him, as if he were a Cain or another Wandering Jew, to ‘pass like night—from land to land,’ and, at uncertain intervals, wrenching him until he made rehearsal of his errors, even at the hard price of ‘holding children from their play and the old men from the chimney corner’ ? That craziness, as the *third* reader deciphers, rose out of a deeper soil than any bodily affection. It had its root in penitential sorrow. O, bitter is the sorrow to a conscientious heart when too late it discovers the depth of a love that has been trampled under foot ! This mariner had slain the creature that, on all the earth, loved him best. In the darkness of his cruel superstition he had done it, to save his human brothers from a fancied inconvenience ; and yet, by that

very act of cruelty, he had himself called destruction upon their heads. The Nemesis that followed punished *him* through *them*—him that wronged, through those that wrongfully he sought to benefit. That spirit who watches over the sanctities of love is a strong angel—is a jealous angel and this angel it was

“That loved the bird, that loved the man,
That shot him with his bow.”

He it was that followed the cruel archer into silent and slumbering seas :

“ Nine fathom deep had followed him
Through the realms of mist and snow.”

This jealous angel it was that pursued the man into noonday darkness, and the vision of dying oceans, into delirium, and, finally, (when recovered from disease,) into an unsettled mind.

Such, also, had been the offence of Kate ; such, also, was the punishment that now is dogging her steps. She, like the mariner, had slain the one sole creature that loved her upon the whole wide earth ; she, like the mariner, for this offence, had been hunted into frost and snow—very soon will be hunted into delirium ; and from *that* (if she escapes with life) will be hunted into the trouble of a heart that cannot rest. There was the excuse

of one darkness for *her*; there was the excuse of another darkness for the mariner; but, with all the excuses that earth, and the darkness of earth, can furnish, bitter it would be for you or me reader, through every hour of life, waking or dreaming, to look back upon one fatal moment when we had pierced the heart that would have died for *us*. In this only the darkness had been merciful to Kate—that it had hidden forever from her victim the hand that slew him. But now, in such utter solitude, her thoughts ran back to their earliest interview. She remembered with anguish how, on first touching the shores of America, almost the very first word that met her ear had been from *him*, the brother whom she had killed, about the “pussy” of times long past; how the gallant young man had hung upon her words as in her native Basque she described her own mischievous little self of twelve years back; how his color went and came whilst his loving memory of the little sister was revived by her own descriptive traits, giving back, as in a mirror, the fawn-like grace, the squirrel-like restlessness, that once had kindled his own delighted laughter; how he would take no denial, but showed on the spot, that simply to have touched, to have kissed, to have played with the little wild thing that glorified

by her innocence the gloom of St. Sebastian's cloisters, gave a *right* to his hospitality ; how, through *him* only, she had found a welcome in camps ; how, through *him*, she had found the avenue to honor and distinction. And yet this brother, so loving and generous, it was that she had dismissed from life. She paused ; she turned round, as if looking back for his grave ; she saw the dreadful wildernesses of snow which already she had traversed. Silent they were at this season, even as, in the panting heats of noon, the Zaarrahs of the torrid zone are oftentimes silent. Dreadful was the silence ; it was the nearest thing to the silence of the grave. Graves were at the foot of the Andes—that she knew too well ; graves were at the summit of the Andes—that she saw too well ; and, as she gazed, a sudden thought flashed upon her when her eyes settled upon the corpses of the poor deserters : Could she, like *them*, have been all this time unconsciously executing judgment upon herself—running from a wrath that was doubtful into the very jaws of a wrath that was inexorable—dying in panic, and behold there was no man that pursued ? For the first time in her life, Kate trembled ; *not* for the first time, Kate wept ; far less for the first time was it that Kate bent her knee—that Kate clasped

her hands—that Kate prayed ; but it *was* the first time that she prayed as *they* pray for whom no more hope is left but in prayer.

Here let me pause a moment for the sake of making somebody angry. A Frenchman, who sadly misjudges Kate, looking at her through a Parisian opera glass, gives it as *his* opinion, that because Kate first records her prayer on this occasion, therefore now first of all she prayed. *I* think not so ; *I* love this Kate, bloodstained as she is ; and *I* could not love a woman that never bent her knee in thankfulness or in supplication. However, we have all a right to our own little opinion ; and it is not *you*, “*mon cher*,” you Frenchman, that I am angry with, but somebody else that stands behind you. You, Frenchman, and your compatriots, I love oftentimes for your festal gayety of heart ; and I quarrel only with your levity and that eternal worldliness that freezes too fiercely—that absolutely blisters with its frost—like the upper air of the Andes. You speak of Kate only as too readily you speak of all women—the instinct of a natural scepticism being to scoff at all hidden depths of truth ; else you are civil enough to Kate ; and your “*homage*” (such as it may happen to be) is always at the service of a woman on the shortest notice. But,

behind *you*, I see a worse fellow ; a gloomy fanatic ; a religious sycophant, that seeks to propitiate his circle by bitterness against the offenses that are most unlike his own ; and against him I must say one word for Kate to the too hasty reader. This villain, whom I mark for a shot if he does not get out of the way, opens his fire on our Kate under shelter of a lie ; for there is a standing lie in the very constitution of civil society, a *necessity* of error, misleading us as to the proportions of crime. Mere necessity obliges man to create many acts into felonies, and to punish them as the heaviest offences, which his better sense teaches him secretly to regard as perhaps among the lightest. Those poor deserters, for instance, —were they necessarily without excuse ? They might have been oppressively used ; but in critical times of war, no matter for the individual palliations, the deserter from his colors *must* be shot—there is no help for it ; as, in extremities of general famine, we shoot the man (alas ! we are *obliged* to shoot him) that is found robbing the common stores in order to feed his own perishing children, though the offence is hardly visible in the sight of God. Only blockheads adjust their scale of guilt to the scale of human punishments. Now, our wicked friend, the fanatic, who culmi-

nates Kate, abuses the advantage, which, for such a purpose, he derives from the exaggerated social estimate of all violence. Personal security being so main an object of social union, we are obliged to frown upon all modes of violence as hostile to the central principle of that union. We are *obliged* to rate it according to the universal results towards which it tends, and scarcely at all according to the special condition of circumstances in which it may originate.

Hence a horror arises for that class of offences which is (philosophically speaking) exaggerated ; and by daily use, the ethics of a police office translate themselves insensibly into the ethics even of religious people. But I tell that sycophantic fanatic, not this only,—viz., that he abuses unfairly, against Kate, the advantage which he has from the *inevitably* distorted bias of society,—but also I tell him this second little thing, viz., that, upon turning away the glass from that one obvious aspect of Kate's character,—her too fiery disposition to vindicate all rights by violence,—and viewing her in relation to *general* religious capacities, she was a thousand times more promisingly endowed than himself. It is impossible to be noble in many things without having many points of contact with true religion. If you deny

that, you it is that calumniate religion. Kate was noble in many things. Her worst errors never took a shape of self-interest or deceit. She was brave, she was generous, she was forgiving, she bore no malice, she was full of truth—qualities that God loves either in man or woman. She hated sycophants and dissemblers. *I* hate them; and more than ever at this moment, on her behalf. I wish she were but here to give a punch on the head to that fellow who traduces her. And, coming round again to the occasion from which this short digression has started,—viz., the question raised by the Frenchman, whether Kate were a person likely to *pray* under other circumstances than those of extreme danger,—I offer it as *my* opinion that she was. Violent people are not always such from choice, but perhaps from situation; and, though the circumstances of Kate's position allowed her little means for realizing her own wishes, it is certain that those wishes pointed continually to peace and an unworldly happiness, if *that* were possible. The stormy clouds that enveloped her in camps opened overhead at intervals, showing her a far-distant blue serene. She yearned, at many times, for the rest which is not in camps or armies; and it is certain that she ever combined with any

plans or daydreams of tranquility, as their most essential ally, some aid derived from that dove-like religion which at St. Sebastian's, as an infant and through girlhood, she had been taught so profoundly to adore.

Now, let us rise from this discussion of Kate against libellers, as Kate herself is rising from prayer, and consider in conjunction with *her* the character and promise of that dreadful ground which lies immediately before her. What is to be thought of it ? I could wish we had a theodolite here, and a spirit level, and other instruments, for settling some important questions. Yet no ; on consideration, if one *had* a wish allowed by that kind fairy without whose assistance it would be quite impossible to send even for the spirit level, nobody would throw away the wish upon things so paltry. I would not put the fairy upon any such errand ; I would order the good creature to bring no spirit level, but a stiff glass of spirits, for Kate—a palanquin, and relays of fifty stout bearers, all drunk, in order that they might not feel the cold. The main interest at this moment and the main difficulty—indeed, the “open question” of the case, was, to ascertain whether the ascent were yet accomplished, or not ; and when

would the descent commence ? or had it, perhaps, long commenced ?

The character of the ground, in those immediate successions that could be connected by the eye, decided nothing ; for the undulations of the level had been so continual for miles as to perplex any eye but an engineer's in attempting to judge whether, upon the whole, the tendency were upwards or downwards. Possibly it was yet neither way ; it is, indeed, probable that Kate had been for some time traveling along a series of terraces that traversed the whole breadth of the topmost area at that point of crossing the Cordilleras, and which, perhaps, but not certainly, compensated any casual tendency downwards by corresponding reascents. Then came the question, How long would these terraces yet continue ? and had the ascending parts *really* balanced the descending ? Upon *that* seemed to rest the final chance for Kate ; because, unless she very soon reached a lower level and a warmer atmosphere, mere weariness would oblige her to lie down under a fierceness of cold that would not suffer her to rise after once losing the warmth of motion ; or, inversely, if she even continued in motion, mere extremity of cold would, of itself, speedily ab-

sorb the little surplus energy for moving which yet remained unexhausted by weariness.

At this stage of her progress, and whilst the agonizing question seemed yet as indeterminate as ever, Kate's struggle with despair, which had been greatly soothed by the fervor of her prayers, revolved upon her in deadlier blackness. All turned, she saw, upon a race against time and the arrears of the road ; and she, poor thing ! how little qualified could *she* be, in such a condition, for a race of any kind, and against two such obstinate brutes as time and space ! This hour of the progress, this noontide of Kate's struggle, must have been the very crisis of the whole. Despair was rapidly tending to ratify itself. Hope, in any degree would be a cordial for sustaining her efforts. But to flounder along a dreadful chaos of snow drifts, or snow chasms, towards a point of rock, which, being turned, should expose only another interminable succession of the same character,—might *that* be endured by ebbing spirits, by stiffening limbs, by the ghastly darkness that was now beginning to gather upon the inner eye ? And, if once despair became triumphant, all the little arreary of physical strength would collapse at once.

O verdure of human fields, cottages of men and

women, (that now suddenly seemed all brothers and sisters,) cottages with children around them at play, that are so far below,—O summer and spring, flowers and blossoms, to which, as to *his* symbols, God has given the gorgeous privilege of rehearsing forever upon earth his most mysterious perfection—life and the resurrections of life,—is it indeed true that poor Kate may never see you more? Mutteringly she put that question to herself; but strange are the caprices of ebb and flow in the deep fountains of human sensibilities. At this very moment, when an utter incapacitation of despair was gathering fast at Kate's heart, a sudden lightning shot far into her spirit, a reflux almost supernatural, from the earliest effects of her prayer. A thought had struck her all at once; and this thought prompted her immediately to turn round. Perhaps it was in some blind yearning after the only memorials of life in this frightful region that she fixed her eye upon a point of hilly ground, by which she identified the spot near which the three corpses were lying.

The silence seemed deeper than ever. Neither was there any phantom memorial of life for the eye or for the ear, nor wing of bird, nor echo, nor green leaf, nor creeping thing that moved or stirred upon the soundless waste. O, what a relief

to this burden of silence would be a human groan ! Here seemed a motive for still darker despair ; and yet at that very moment a pulse of joy began to thaw the ice at her heart. It struck her, as she reviewed the ground, that undoubtedly it had been for some time slowly descending. Her senses were much dulled by suffering ; but this thought it was, suggested by a sudden apprehension of a continued descending movement, which had caused her to turn round. Sight had confirmed the suggestion first derived from her own steps. The distance attained was now sufficient to establish the tendency. O, yes, yes, to a certainty she had been descending for some time. Frightful was the spasm of joy which whispered that the worst was over. It was as when the shadow of midnight, that murderers had relied on, is passing away from your beleaguered shelter, and dawn will soon be manifest. It was as when a flood, that all day long has raved against the walls of your house, has ceased (you suddenly think) to rise : yes, measured by a golden plummet, it *is* sinking beyond a doubt, and the darlings of your household are saved. Kate faced round in agitation to her proper direction. She saw, what previously in her stunning confusion she had *not* seen, that, hardly two stones' throw

in advance, lay a mass of rock, split as into a gateway. Through that opening it now became probable that the road was lying. Hurrying forward, she passed within the natural gates—gates of paradise they were. Ah, what a vista did that gateway expose before her dazzled eye! what a revelation of heavenly promise! Full two miles long stretched a long, narrow glen, every where descending, and in many parts rapidly. All was now placed beyond a doubt. She *was* descending, for hours, perhaps, *had* been descending, insensibly, the mighty staircase. Yes, Kate is leaving behind her the kingdom of frost and the victories of death. Two miles farther there may be rest, if there is not shelter. And very soon, as the crest of her newborn happiness, she distinguished at the other end of that rocky vista a pavilion-shaped mass of dark-green foliage—a belt of trees, such as we see in the lovely parks of England, but islanded by a screen (though not every where occupied by the usurpations) of a thick, bushy undergrowth. O verdure of dark olive foliage, offered suddenly to fainting eyes as if by some winged patriarchal herald of wrath relenting,—solitary Arab's tent rising with saintly signals of peace in the dreadful desert,—must Kate indeed die even yet whilst she sees but can-

not reach you ? Outpost on the frontier of man's dominions, standing within life, but looking out upon everlasting death, wilt thou hold up the anguish of thy mocking invitation only to betray ? Never, perhaps, in this world was the line so exquisitely grazed that parts salvation and ruin. As the dove to her dovecot from the swooping hawk, as the Christian pinnace to Christian batteries from the bloody Mahometan corsair, so flew, so tried to fly, towards the anchoring thickets, that, alas ! could not weigh their anchors and make sail to meet her, the poor, exhausted Kate from the vengeance of pursuing frost.

And she reached them. Staggering, fainting, reeling, she entered beneath the canopy of umbrageous trees. But, as oftentimes the Hebrew fugitive to a city of refuge, flying for his life before the avenger of blood, was pressed so hotly, that, on entering the archway of what seemed to *him* the heavenly city gate, as he kneeled in deep thankfulness to kiss its holy, merciful shadow, he could not rise again, but sank instantly with infant weakness into sleep—sometimes to wake no more,—so sank, so collapsed upon the ground, without power to choose her couch, and with little prospect of ever rising again to her feet, the martial nun. She lay, as luck had ordered it,

with her head screened by the undergrowth of bushes from any gale that might arise ; she lay exactly as she sank, with her eyes up to heaven. And thus it was that the nun saw before falling asleep, the two sights that upon earth are fittest for the closing eyes of a nun, whether destined to open again or to close forever. She saw the interlacing of boughs overhead, forming a dome that seemed like the dome of a cathedral. She saw through the fretwork of the foliage another dome, far beyond—the dome of an evening sky—the dome of some heavenly cathedral not built with hands. She saw upon this upper dome the vesper lights, all alive with pathetic grandeur of coloring from a sunset that had just been rolling down like a chorus. She had not till now consciously observed the time of day : whether it were morning, or whether it were afternoon, in her confusion she had not distinctly known. But now she whispered to herself, “*It is evening;*” and what lurked half unconsciously in these words might be : “The sun, that rejoices, has finished his days toil ; man that labors, has finished *his* ; I, that suffer, have finished mine.” That might be what she thought ; but what *she* said was, “It is evening ; and the hour is come when the *Angelus* is sounding through St. Sebastian.”

What made her think of St. Sebastian, so far away in the depths and space of time? Her brain was wandering now that her feet were *not*; and, because her eyes had descended from the heavenly to the earthly dome, *that* made her think of earthly cathedrals, and of cathedral choirs, and of St. Sebastian's chapel, with its silvery bells that carried the *Angelus* far into mountain recesses. Perhaps, as her wanderings increased, she thought herself back in childhood; became "pussy" once again; fancied that all since then was a frightful dream; that she was not upon the dreadful Andes, but still kneeling in the holy chapel at vespers; still innocent as then; loved as then she had been loved; and that all men were liars who said her hand was ever stained with blood. Little enough is mentioned of the delusions which possessed her; but that little gives a key to the impulse which her palpitating heart obeyed and which her rambling brain forever reproduced in multiplying mirrors. Restlessness kept her in waking dreams for a brief half hour. But then fever and delirium would wait no longer; the killing exhaustion would no longer be refused; the fever, the delirium, and the exhaustion swept in together with power like an army with banners; and the nun ceased through the gathering twi-

light any more to watch the cathedrals of earth or the more solemn cathedrals that rose in the heavens above.

All night long she slept in her verdurous St. Bernard's hospice without awaking ; and whether she would *ever* awake seemed to depend upon an accident. The slumber that towered above her brain was like that fluctuating, silvery column which stands in scientific tubes—sinking, rising, deepening, lightening, contracting, expanding ; or like the mist that sits through sultry afternoons upon the river of the American St. Peter, sometimes rarefying for minutes into sunny gauze, sometimes condensing for hours into palls of funeral darkness. You fancy that, after twelve hours of *any* sleep, she must have been refreshed ; better, at least than she was last night. Ah, but sleep is not always sent upon missions of refreshment : sleep is sometimes the secret chamber in which Death arranges his machinery : sleep is sometimes that deep, mysterious atmosphere in which the human spirit is slowly unsettling its wings for flight from earthly tenements. It is now eight o'clock in the morning ; and, to all appearance, if Kate should receive no aid before noon, when next the sun is departing to his rest, Kate will be departing to hers ; when next

the sun is holding out his golden Christian signal to man that the hour is come for letting his anger go down, Kate will be sleeping away forever into the arms of brotherly forgiveness.

What is wanted just now for Kate, supposing Kate herself to be wanted by this world, is, that this world would be kind enough to send her a little brandy before it is too late. The simple truth was,—and a truth which I have known to take place in more ladies than Kate, who died, or did *not* die, accordingly as they had an adviser like myself, capable of giving so sound an opinion,—that the jewelly star of life had descended too far down the arch towards setting for any chance of reascending by *spontaneous* effort. The fire was still burning in secret, but needed to be rekindled by potent artificial breath. It lingered, and *might* linger, but would never culminate again without some stimulus from earthly vineyards. Kate was ever lucky, though ever unfortunate; and the world, being of my opinion, that Kate was worth saving, made up its mind about half past eight o'clock in the morning to save her. Just at that time, when the night was over and its sufferings were hidden in one of those intermittent gleams that for a moment or two lightened the clouds of her slumber, Kate's dull

ear caught a sound that for years had spoken a familiar language to *her*. What was it? It was the sound, though muffled and deadened, like the ear that heard it, of horsemen advancing. Interpreted by the tumultuous dreams of Kate, was it the cavalry of Spain, at whose head so often had she charged the bloody Indian scalpers? Was it, according to the legend of ancient days, cavalry that had been sown by her brother's blood, cavalry that rose up from the ground on an inquest of retribution, and were racing up the Andes to seize her? Her dreams, that had opened sullenly to the sound, waited for no answer, but closed again in pompous darkness.

Happily the horseman had caught the glimpse of some bright ornament, clasp, or aigulet on Kate's dress. They were hunters and foresters from below—servants in the household of a benevolent lady; and, in some pursuit of flying game, had wandered beyond their ordinary limits. Struck by the sudden scintillation from Kate's dress played upon by the morning sun, they rode up to the thicket. Great was their surprise, great their pity, to see a young officer stretched within the bushes upon the ground, and perhaps dying. Borderers from childhood on this dreadful frontier, sacred to winter and death, they understood

the case at once. They dismounted; and with the tenderness of women, raising the poor frozen cornet in their arms, washed her temples with brandy, whilst one, at intervals, suffered a few drops to trickle within her lips. As the restoration of a warm bed was now most likely to be successfnl, they lifted the helpless stranger upon a horse, walking on each side with supporting arms. Once again our Kate is in the saddle—once again a Spanish caballdor. But Kate's bridle hand is deadly cold; and her spurs, that she had never unfastened since leaving the monastic asylum, hung as idle as the flapping sail that fills unsteadily with the breeze upon a stranded ship.

This procession had some miles to go and over difficult ground; but at length it reached the forest-like park and the chateau of the wealthy proprietress. Kate was still half frozen and speechless except at intervals. Heavens! can this corpselike, languishing young woman be the Kate that once in her radiant girlhood rode with a handful of comrades into a column of two thousand enemies; that saw her comrades die; that persisted when all were dead; that tore from the heart of all resistance the banner of her native Spain? Chance and change have “written strange defeatures in her face.” Much is chang-

ed; but things are not changed: there is still kindness that overflows with pity; there is still helplessness that asks for pity without a voice. She is now received by a senora not less kind than that maternal aunt, who on the night of her birth first welcomed her to a loving home; and she, the heroine of Spain, is herself as helpless now as that little lady who, at ten minutes of age, was kissed and blessed by all the household of St. Sebastian:

Let us suppose Kate placed in a warm bed; let us suppose her in a few hours recovering steady consciousness; in a few days recovering some power of self-support; in a fortnight able to seek the gay saloon, where the senora was sitting alone, and rendering thanks, with that deep sincerity which ever characterized our wildhearted Kate, for the critical services received from that lady and her establishment.

This lady, a widow, was what the French call a *metisse*, the Spaniards *mestizza*; that is, the daughter of a genuine Spaniard and an Indian mother. I shall call her simply a *ceole*, which will indicate her want of pure Spanish blood sufficiently to explain her deference for those who had it. She was a kind, liberal woman; rich, rather more than needed where there were

no opera boxes to rent ; a widow about fifty years old in the wicked world's account, some forty-four in her own ; and happy, above all, in the possession of a most lovely daughter, whom even the wicked world did not accuse of more than sixteen years. This daughter, Juana, was— But stop : let her open the door of the saloon in which the senora and the cornet are conversing, and speak for herself. She did so, after an hour had passed ; which length of time, to *her*, that never had any business whatever in her innocent life, seemed sufficient to settle the business of the old world and the new. Had Pietro Diaz (as Catalina now called herself) been really a Peter, and not a sham Peter, what a vision of loveliness would have rushed upon his sensibilities as the door opened ! Do not expect me to describe her ; for which, however, there are materials extant, sleeping in archives, where they have slept for two hundred and twenty years. It is enough that she is reported to have united the stately tread of Andalusian women with the innocent voluptuousness of Peruvian eyes. As to her complexion and figure, be it known that Juana's father was a gentleman from Grenada, having in his veins the grandest blood of all this earth, blood of Goths and Vandals,

tainted (for which Heaven be thanked !) twice over with blood of Arabs—once through Moors, once through Jews ; whilst from her grandmother Juana drew the deep subtle melancholy and the beautiful contours of limb which belong to the Indian race—a race destined silently and slowly to fade from the earth. No awkwardness was, or could be, in this antelope, when gliding with forest grace into the room ; no townbred shame ; nothing but the unaffected pleasure of one who wishes to speak a fervent welcome, but knows not if she ought—the astonishment of a Miranda, bred in utter solitude, when first beholding a princely Ferdinand ; and just so much reserve as to remind you that if Catalina thought fit to dissemble her sex, she did *not*. And consider, reader, if you look back and are a great arithmetician, that, whilst the senora had only fifty per cent. of Spanish blood, Juana had seventy-five ; so that her Indian melancholy, after all, was swallowed up for the present by her Vandal, by her Arab, by her Spanish fire.

Catalina, seared as she was by the world, has left it evident in her memoirs that she was touched more than she wished to be by this innocent child. Juana formed a brief lull for Catalina in her too stormy existence ; and if for

her in this life the sweet reality of a sister had been possible, here was the sister she would have chosen. On the other hand, what might Juana think of the cornet? To have been thrown upon the kind hospitalities of her native home, to have been rescued by her mother's servants from that fearful death which, lying but a few miles off, had filled her nursery with traditional tragedies,—*that* was sufficient to create an interest in the stranger. But his bold martial demeanor, his yet youthful style of beauty, his frank manners, his animated conversation that reported a hundred contests with suffering and peril, wakened for the first time her admiration. Men she had never seen before, except menial servants or a casual priest, but here was a gentleman, young like herself, that rode in the cavalry of Spain; that carried the banner of the only potentate whom Peruvians knew of—the King of the Spains and the Indies; that had doubled Cape Horn; that had crossed the Andes; that had suffered shipwreck; that had rocked upon fifty storms; and had wrestled for life through fifty battles.

The reader knows all that followed. The sisterly love which Catalina did really feel for this young mountaineer was inevitably misconstrued.

Embarrassed, but not able, from sincere affection, or almost in bare propriety, to refuse such expressions of feeling as corresponded to the artless and involuntary kindnesses of the ingenuous Juana, one day the cornet was surprised by mamma in the act of encircling her daughter's waist with his martial arm, although waltzing was premature by at least two centuries in Peru. She taxed him instantly with dishonorably abusing her confidence. The cornet made but a bad defence. He muttered something "*fraternal affection*," about "*esteem*," and a great deal of metaphysical words that are destined to remain untranslated in their original Spanish. The good senora, though she could boast only of forty-four years' experience, was not altogether to be "*had*" in that fashion: she was as learned as if she had been fifty; and she brought matters to a speedy crisis. "*You are a Spaniard*," she said, "*a gentleman*, therefore; *remember* that you are a gentleman. This very night, if your intentions are not serious, quit my house. Go to Tucuman; you shall command my horses and servants; but stay no longer to increase the sorrow that already you will have left behind you. My daughter loves you. That is sorrow enough, if you are trifling with us; but if not, and you also love *her*,

and can be happy in our solitary mode of life, stay with us—stay forever. Marry Juana with my free consent. I ask not for wealth. Mine is sufficient for you both.” The cornet protested that the honor was one never contemplated by *him*—that it was too great—that— But of course, reader, you know that “gammon” flourishes in Peru amongst the silver mines as well as in some more boreal lands that produce little better than copper and tin. “Tin,” however, has its uses. The delighted senora overruled all objections, great and small; and she confirmed Juana’s notion, that the business of two worlds could be transacted in an hour, by settling her daughter’s future happiness in exactly twenty minutes. The poor, weak Catalina, not acting now in any spirit of recklessness, grieving sincerely for the gulf that was opening before her, and yet shrinking effeminate from the momentary shock that would be inflicted by a firm adherence to her duty, clinging to the anodyne of a short delay, allowed herself to be installed as the lover of Juana. Considerations of convenience, however, postponed the marriage. It was requisite to make various purchases; and for this it was requisite to visit Tucuman, where also the marriage ceremony could be performed with more

circumstantial splendor. To Tucuman, therefore, after some weeks' interval, the whole party repaired ; and at Tucuman it was that the tragical events arose which, whilst interrupting such a mockery forever, left the poor Juana still happily deceived, and never believing for a moment that hers was a rejected or a deluded heart.

One reporter of Mr. De Ferrer's narrative forgets his usual generosity when he says that the senora's gift of her daughter to the alferez was not quite so disinterested as it seemed to be. Certainly it was not so disinterested as European ignorance might fancy it ; but it was quite as much so as it ought to have been in balancing the interests of a child. Very true it is, that, being a genuine Spaniard, who was still a rare creature in so vast a world as Peru, being a Spartan amongst Helots, an Englishman amongst savages, an alferez would in those days have been a natural noble. His alliance created honor for his wife and for his descendants. Something, therefore, the cornet would add to the family consideration. But, instead of selfishness, it argued just regard for her daughter's interest to build upon this, as some sort of equipoise to the wealth which her daughter would bring.

Spaniard, however, as he was, our alferez on reaching Tucuman, found no Spaniards to mix with, but, instead, twelve Portuguese.

Catalina remembered the Spanish proverb—“Subtract from a Spaniard all his good qualities, and the remainder makes a pretty fair Portuguese ;” but as there was nobody else to gamble with, she entered freely into their society. Very soon she suspected that there was foul play : all modes of doctoring dice had been made familiar to *her* by the experience of camps. She watched ; and, by the time she had lost her final coin, she was satisfied that she had been plundered. In her first anger she would have been glad to switch the whole dozen across the eyes ; but, as twelve to one were too great odds, she determined on limiting her vengeance to the immediate culprit. Him she followed into the street ; and, coming near enough to distinguish his profile reflected on a wall, she continued to keep him in view from a short distance. The light-hearted young cavalier whistled, as he went, an old Portuguese ballad of romance, and in a quarter of an hour came up to a house, the front door of which he began to open with a pass key. This operation was the signal for Catalina that the hour of vengeance had struck ; and stepping hastily up, she tapped the

Portuguese on the shoulder, saying, “Senor, you are a robber!” The Portuguese turned coolly round, and, seeing his gaming antagonist, replied, “Possibly, sir; but I have no particular fancy for being told so,” at the same time drawing his sword. Catalina had not designed to take advantage; and the touching him on the shoulder, with the interchange of speeches, and the known character of Kate, sufficiently imply it. But it is too probable in such cases that the party whose intention has been regularly settled from the first will and must have an advantage unconsciously over a man so abruptly thrown on his defence. However this may be they had not fought a minute before Catalina passed her sword through her opponent’s body; and without a groan or a sigh the Portuguese cavalier fell dead at his own door. Kate searched the street with her ears and (as far as the indistinctness of night allowed) with her eyes. All was profoundly silent; and she was satisfied that no human figure was in motion. What should be done with the body? A glance at the door of the house settled *that*. Fernando had himself opened it at the very moment when he received the summons to turn round. She dragged the corpse in, therefore, to the foot of the staircase, put the key by the dead man’s

side, and then, issuing softly into the street, drew the door close with as little noise as possible. Catalina again paused to listen and to watch, went home to the hospitable senora's house, retired to bed, fell asleep, and early the next morning was awakened by the corregidor and four alguazils.

The lawlessness of all that followed strikingly exposes the frightful state of criminal justice at that time wherever Spanish law prevailed. No evidence appeared to connect Catalina in any way with the death of Fernando Acosta. The Portuguese gamblers, besides that, perhaps, they thought lightly of such an accident, might have reasons of their own for drawing off public attention from their pursuits in Tucuman. Not one of these men came forward openly ; else the circumstances at the gaming table, and the departure of Catalina so closely on the heels of her opponent, would have suggested reasonable grounds for detaining her until some further light should be obtained. As it was, her imprisonment rested upon no colorable ground whatever, unless the magistrate had received some anonymous information, which, however, he never alleged. One comfort there was, meantime, in Spanish injustice--it did not loiter. Full

gallop it went over the ground. One week often sufficed for informations, for trial, for execution : and the only bad consequence was, that a second or a third week sometimes exposed the disagreeable fact that everything had been “ premature ;” a solemn sacrifice had been made to offended justice, in which all was right except as to the victim. It was the wrong man ; and *that* gave extra trouble, for then all was to do over again, another man to be executed, and, possibly, still to be caught.

Justice moved at her usual Spanish rate in the present case. Kate was obliged to rise instantly ; not suffered to speak to anybody in the house ; though, in going out, a door opened, and she saw the young Juana looking out with saddest Indian expression. In one day the trial was all finished. Catalina said (which was true) that she hardly knew Acosta, and that people of her rank were used to attack their enemies face to face, not by murderous surprises. The magistrates were impressed with Catalina’s answers (yet answered to *what?*) Things were beginning to look well, when all was suddenly upset by two witnesses, whom the reader (who is a sort of accomplice after the fact, having been privately let into the truths of the case and having concealed his knowl-

edge) will know at once to be false witnesses, but whom the old Spanish buzwigs doted on as models of all that could be looked for in the best. Both were very ill-looking fellows, as it was their duty to be. And the first deposed as follows : “That, through *his* quarter of Tucuman, the fact was notorious of Acosta’s wife being the object of a criminal pursuit on the part of the alferez, (Catalina;) that *doubtless* the injured husband had surprised the prisoner, which of course had led to the murder, to the staircase, to the key—to everything, in short, that could be wished,—no—stop ! what am I saying ?—to everything that ought to be abominated.

Finally,—for he had now settled the main question,—that he had a friend who would take up the case where he himself, from shortsightedness, was obliged to lay it down.” This friend, the Pythias of this shortsighted Damon, started up in a frenzy of virtue at this summons, and, rushing to the front of the alguazils, said, “That, since his friend had proved sufficiently the fact of the alferez having been lurking in the house and having murdered a man, all that rested upon *him* to show was, how that murderer got out of the house, which he could do satisfactorily ; for

there was a balcony running along the windows on the second floor, one of which windows he himself, lurking in a corner of the street, saw the alferez throw up, and, from the said balcony, take a flying leap into the said street.’’ Evidence like this was conclusive ; no defence was listened to ; nor, indeed, had the prisoner any to produce. The alferez could deny neither the staircase nor the balcony ; the street is there to this day, like the bricks in Jack Cade’s chimney, testifying all that may be required ; and as to our friend who saw the leap, there he was ; nobody could deny *him*. The prisoner might indeed have suggested that she never heard of Acosta’s wife, nor had the existence of such a wife been ripened even into a suspicion. But the bench were satisfied ; chopping logic was of no use ; and sentence was pronounced—that, on the eighth day from the day of arrest, the alferez should be executed in the public square.

It was not amongst the weaknesses of Catalina, who had so often inflicted death, and, by her own journal, thought so lightly of inflicting it, (if not under cowardly advantages,) to shrink from facing death in her own person. Many incidents in her career show the coolness and even gayety with which, in any case where death was apparently

inevitable, she would have gone to meet it. But in this case she *had* a temptation for escaping it, which was probably in her power. She had only to reveal the secret of her sex, and the ridiculous witnessess, beyond whose testimony there was nothing at all against her, must at once be covered with derision. Catalina had some liking for fun; and a main inducement to this course was, that it would enable her to say to the judges, “Now you see what old fools you’ve made of yourselves; every woman and child in Peru will soon be laughing at you.” I must acknowledge my own weakness; this last temptation I could *not* have withstood; flesh is weak, and fun is strong. But Catalina *did*. On consideration, she fancied that, although the particular motive for murdering Acosta would be dismissed with laughter, still this might not clear her of the murder, which on some *other* motive she might have committed. But, supposing that she were cleared altogether, what most of all she feared was, that the publication of her sex would throw a reflex light upon many past transactions in her life, would instantly find its way to Spain, and would probably soon bring her within the tender attentions of the Inquisition. She kept firm to the resolution of not saving her life by this discovery, and, so far

as her fate lay in her own hands, she would (as the reader will perceive from a little incident at the scaffold) have perished to a certainty. But, even at this point, how strange a case! A woman *falsely* accused of an act which she really *did* commit, and falsely accused of a true offense upon a motive that was impossible!

As the sun set upon the seventh day, when the hours were numbered for the prisoner, there filed into her cell four persons in religious habits. They came on the charitable mission of preparing the poor convict for death. Catalina, however, watching all things narrowly, remarked something earnest and significant in the eye of the leader, as of one who had some secret communication to make. She contrived to clasp this man's hands, as if in the energy of internal struggles; and he contrived to slip into hers the very smallest of billets from poor Juana. It contained, for indeed it *could* contain, only these three words: "Do not confess. J." This one caution, so simple and so brief, was a talisman. It did not refer to any confession of the crime,—*that* would have been assuming what Juana was neither entitled nor disposed to assume,—but, in the technical sense of the church, to the act of devotional confession. Catalina found a single moment for a

glance at it—understood the whole—resolutely refused to confess, as a person unsettled in her religious opinions—that needed spiritual instructions; and the four monks withdrew to make their report. The principal judge, upon hearing of the prisoner's impenitence, granted another day. At the end of *that*, no change having occurred either in the prisoner's mind or in the circumstances, he issued his warrant for the execution. Accordingly, as the sun went down, the sad procession formed within the prison. Into the great square of Tucuman it moved, where the scaffold had been built and the whole city had assembled for the spectacle. Catalina steadily ascended the ladder of the scaffold, even then she resolved not to benefit by revealing her sex; even then it was that she expressed her scorn for the lubberly executioner's mode of tying a knot; did it herself in a “ship shape,” orthodox manner; received in return the enthusiastic plaudits of the crowd, and so far ran the risk of precipitating her fate; for the timid magistrates, fearing a rescue from the impetuous mob, angrily ordered the executioner to finish the scene. The clatter of a galloping horse, however, at this instant forced them to pause. The crowd opened a road for the agitated horseman, who was the bearer of an order from

the president of La Plata to suspend the execution until two prisoners could be examined. The whole was the work of the senora and her daughter. The elder lady, having gathered informations against the witnesses, had pursued them to La Plata. There, by her influence with the governor, they were arrested, recognized as old malefactors, and, in their terror, had partly confessed their perjury. Catalina was removed to La Plata; solemnly acquitted ; and, by advice of the president, for the present the connection with the senora's family was postponed indefinitely.

Now was the last adventure approaching that ever Catalina should see in the new world. Some fine sights may yet be seen in Europe, but nothing after this (*which she has recorded*) in America. Europe, if it had ever heard of her name, (which very shortly it *shall*,) kings, pope, cardinals, if they were but aware of her existence, (which in six months they *shall* be,) would thirst for an introduction to our Catalina. You hardly thought now, reader, that she was such a great person, or anybody's pet but yours and mine. Bless you, sir, she would scorn to look at *us*. I tell you, royalties are languishing to see her, or soon *will* be. But how can this come to pass if she is to continue in her present obscurity ? Certainly it

cannot without some great *peripetteia* or vertiginous whirl of fortune ; which, therefore you shall now behold taking place in one turn of her next adventure. *That* shall let in a light, *that* shall throw back a Claud Lorraine gleam over all the past, able to make kings, that would have cared not for her under Peruvian daylight, come to glorify her setting beams.

The senora—and, observe, whatever kindness she does to Catalina speaks secretly from two hearts, her own and Juana's—had, by the advice of Mr. President Mendonia, given sufficient money for Catalina's traveling expenses. So far well. But Mr. M. chose to add a little codicil to this bequest of the senora's never suggested by her or by her daughter. “Pray,” said this inquisitive president, who surely might have found business enough in La Plata,—“pray, Senor Pietro Diaz, did you everlive at Conception ? and were you ever acquainted with Senor Miguel de Eruaso ? That man, sir, was my friend.” What a pity that on this occasion Catalina could not venture to be candid ! What a capital speech it would have made to say, “*Friend* were you ! I think you could hardly be *that*, with seven hundred miles between you. But that man was *my* friend also ; and secondly, my brother. True it is I

killed him ; but if you happen to know that this was by pure mistake in the dark, what an old rogue you must be to throw *that* in my teeth, which is the affliction of my life ! ” Again, however, as so often in the same circumstances, Catalina thought that it would cause more ruin than it could heal to be candid ; and, indeed, if she were really *P. Diaz, Esq.*, how came she to be brother to the late Mr. Erauso ? On consideration, also, if she could not tell *all*, merely to have professed a fraternal connection which never was avowed by either whilst living together, would not have brightened the reputation of Catalina, which too surely required a scouring. Still, from my kindness for poor Kate, I feel uncharitably towards the president for advising Senor Pietro “ to travel for his health.” What had *he* to do with people’s health ? However, Mr. Peter, as he had pocketed the senora’s money, thought it right to pocket also the advice that accompanied its payment. That he might be in a condition to do so, he went off to buy a horse. He was in luck today ; for, beside money and advice, he obtained at a low rate, a horse both beautiful and serviceable for a journey. To Paz it was, a city of prosperous name, that the cornet first moved. But Paz did not fulfil the promise of its name ; for it

laid the grounds of a feud that drove our Kate out of America.

Her first adventure was a bagatelle, and fitter for a jest book than for a history; yet it proved no jest either, since it led to the tragedy that followed. Riding into Paz, our gallant standard bearer and her bonny black horse drew all eyes, *comme de raison*, upon their separate charms. This was inevitable amongst the idolent population of a Spanish town, and Kate was used to it; but, having recently had a little too much of the public attention, she felt nervous on remarking two soldiers eying the handsome horse and the handsome rider with an attention that seemed too solemn for mere *aesthetics*. However, Kate was not the kind of person to let anything dwell on her spirits, especially if it took the shape of impudence; and, whistling gayly, she was riding forward, when who should cross her path but the alcalde! Ah, alcalde, you see a person now that has a mission against you, though quite unknown to herself. He looked so sternly that Kate asked if his worship had any commands. "These men," said the alcalde, "these two soldiers say this horse is stolen." To one who had so narrowly and so lately escaped the balcony witness and his friend, it was really no laughing matter to hear of

new affidavits in preparation. Kate was nervous, but never disconcerted. In a moment she had twitched off a saddle cloth on which she sat, and throwing it over the horse's head, so as to cover up all between the ears and the mouth, she replied 'that she had bought and paid for the horse at La Plata. But now, your worship, if this horse has really been stolen from these men, they must know well of which eye it is blind; for it *can* be only in the right eye or the left.' One of the soldiers cried out instantly that it was in the left left eye; but the other said, "No, no, you forget; it's the right." Kate maliciously called attention to this little schism. But the men said, 'Ah, *that* was nothing—they were hurried; but now, on recollecting themselves, they were agreed that it was the left eye.' Did they stand to that? "O, yes, positive they were; left eye—left."

Upon which our Kate, twitching off the horse cloth, said gayly to the magistrate, "Now, sir please to observe that this horse has nothing the matter with either eye." And in fact is was so. Then his worship ordered his alguazils to apprehend the two witnesses, who posted off to bread and water, with other reversionary advantages,

whilst Kate rode in quest of the best dinner Paz could furnish.

This alcalde's acquaintance, however, was not destined to drop here. Something had appeared in the young *caballero's* bearing which made it painful to have addressed him with harshness or for a moment to have entertained such a charge against such a person. He despatched his cousin, therefore, Don Antonio Calderon, to offer his apologies, and at the same time to request that the stranger, whose rank and quality he regretted not to have known, would do him the honor to come and dine with him. This explanation, and the fact that Don Antonio had already proclaimed his own position as cousin to the magistrate and nephew to the Bishop of Cuzco, obliged Catalina to say after thanking the gentlemen for their obliging attentions, "I myself hold the rank of alferez in the service of his Catholic majesty. I am a native of Biscay; and I am now repairing to Cuzco on private business." "To Cuzco!" exclaimed Don Antonio. "How very fortunate! My cousin is a Basque like you; and, like you, he starts for Cuzco to-morrow morning; so that, if it is agreeable to you, Senor Alferez, we will travel together."

It was settled that they should. To travel

amongst “balcony witnesses” and anglers for “blind horses,” not merely with a just man, but with the very abstract idea and riding allegory of justice, was too delightful to the storm-wearied cornet; and he cheerfully accompanied Don Antonio to the house of the magistrate, called Don Pedro de Chavarria. Distinguished was his reception. The alcalde personally renewed his regrets for the ridiculous scene of the two scampish oculists, and presented him to his wife, a splendid Andalusian beauty, to whom he had been married about a year.

This lady there is a reason for describing; and the French reporter of Catalina’s memoirs dwells upon the theme. She united, he says, the sweetness of the German lady with the energy of the Arabian—a combination hard to judge of. As to her feet, he adds, I say nothing; for she had scarcely any at all. “*Je ne parle point de ses pieds, elle n’en avait presque pas.*” “Poor lady!” says a compassionate rustic: “no feet! What a shocking thing that so fine a woman should have been so sadly mutilated!” O my dear rustic, you’re quite in the wrong box. The Frenchman means this as the very highest compliment. Beautiful, however, she must have been, and a Cinderella, I hope, nota Cinderellula,

considering that she had the inimitable walk and step of the Andalusians, which cannot be accomplished without something of a proportionate basis to stand upon.

The reason which there is (as I have said) for describing this lady, arises out of her relation to the tragic events which followed. She, by her criminal levity, was the cause of all; and I must here warn the moralizing blunderer of two errors that he is too likely to make: 1st. That he is invited to read some extract from a licentious amour as if for its own interest; 2d. Or on account of Donna Catalina's memoirs, with a view to relieve their too martial character. I have the pleasure to assure him of his being so utterly in the darkness of error that any possible change he can make in his opinions, right or left, must be for the better: he cannot stir but he will mend, which is a delightful thought for the moral and blundering mind. As to the first point, what little glimpse he obtains of a licentious amour is, as a court of justice will sometimes show him such a glimpse, simply to make intelligible the subsequent facts which depend upon it. Secondly, as to the conceit, that Catalina wished to embellish her memoirs, understand that no such practice then existed, certainly not in Spanish

literature. Her memoirs are electrifying by their facts ; else, in the manner of telling these facts, they are systematically dry.

Don Antonia Calderon was a handsome, accomplished cavalier ; and, in the course of dinner, Catalina was led to judge, from the behavior to each other of this gentleman and the lady, the alcalde's beautiful wife, that they had an improper understanding. This also she inferred from the furtive language of their eyes. Her wonder was that the alcalde should be so blind ; though upon that point she saw reason in a day or two to change her opinion. Some people see everything by affecting to see nothing. The whole affair, however, was nothing at all to *her* ; and she would have dismissed it from her thoughts altogether but for what happened on the journey.

From the miserable roads, eight hours a day of traveling was found quite enough for man and beast, the product of which eight hours was from ten to twelve leagues. On the last day but one of the journey, the traveling party, which was precisely the original dinner party, reached a little town ten leagues short of Cuzco. The corregidor of this place was a friend of the alcalde ; and through *his* influence the party obtained bet-

ter accommodations than those which they had usually had, in a hovel calling itself a *venta*, or in the sheltered corner of a barn. The alcalde was to sleep at the corregidor's house ; the two young cavaliers, Calderon and our Kate, had sleeping rooms at the public *locanda* ; but for the lady was reserved a little pleasure house in an enclosed garden. This was a plaything of a house ; but the season being summer, and the house surrounded with tropical flowers, the lady preferred it (in spite of its loneliness) to the damp mansion of the official grandee, who, in her humble opinion, was quite as fusty as his mansion, and his mansion not much less so than himself.

After dining gayly together at the *locanda*, and possibly taking a “rise” out of his worship the corregidor, as a repeating echo of Don Quixote, (then growing popular in Spanish America,) the young man who was no young officer, and the young officer who was no young man, lounged down together to the little pavilion in the flower garden, with the purpose of paying their respects to the presiding belle. They were graciously received, and had the honor of meeting there his mustiness the alcalde and his fustiness the corregidor, whose conversation was surely improving, but not equally brilliant. How they got on under

the weight of two such muffs has been a mystery for two centuries. But they *did* to a certainty ; for the party did not break up till eleven. *Tea and turn out* you could not call it ; for there was the *turn out* in rigor, but not the *tea*. One thing, however, Catalina by mere accident had an opportunity of observing, and observed with pain. The two official gentlemen had gone down the steps into the garden. Catalina, having forgotten her hat, went back into the little vestibule to look for it. There stood the lady and Don Antonio, exchanging a few final words (they *were* final) and a few final signs. Amongst the last Kate observed distinctly this, and distinctly she understood it. First drawing Calderon's attention to the gesture, as one of significant pantomime, by raising her forefinger, the lady snuffed out one of the candles. The young man answered it by a look of intelligence, and all three passed down the steps together. The lady was disposed to take the cool air, and accompanied them to the garden gate ; but in passing down the walk, Catalina noticed a second ill-omened sign that all was not right. Two glaring eyes she distinguished amongst the shrubs for a moment, and a rustling immediately after. "What's that?" said the lady; and Don Antonio

answered carelessly, “A bird flying out of the bushes.”

Catalina, as usual, had read everything; not a wrinkle or rustle was lost upon *her*; and, therefore, when she reached the *locanda*, knowing to an iota all that was coming, she did not retire to bed, but paced before the house. She had not long to wait; in fifteen minutes the door opened softly, and out stepped Calderon. Kate walked forward and faced him immediately, telling him, laughingly, that it was not good for his health to go abroad on this night. The young man showed some impatience; upon which, very seriously, Kate acquainted him with her suspicions, and with the certainty that the *alcalde* was not so blind as he had seemed. Calderon thanked her for the information; would be upon his guard; but, to prevent further expostulation, he wheeled around instantly into the darkness. Catalina was too well convinced, however, of the mischief on foot to leave him thus. She followed rapidly, and passed silently into the garden almost at the same time with Calderon. Both took their stations behind trees—Calderon watching nothing but the burning candles, Catalina watching circumstances to direct her movements. The candles burned brightly in the little pavilion. Pres-

ently one was extinguished. Upon this Calderon pressed forward to the steps, hastily ascended them, and passed into the vestibule. Catalina followed on his traces. What succeeded was all one scene of continued, dreadful dumb show; different passions of panic, or deadly struggle, or hellish malice absolutely suffocated all articulate words.

In a moment a gurgling sound was heard, as of a wild beast attempting vainly to yell over some creature that it was strangling. Next came a tumbling out at the door of one black mass, which heaved and parted at intervals into two figures, which closed, which parted again, which at last fell down the steps together. Then appeared a figure in white. It was the unhappy Andalusian; and she, seeing the outline of Catalina's person, ran up to her, unable to utter one syllable. Pitying the agony of her horror, Catalina took her within her own cloak and carried her out at the garden gate. Calderon had by this time died; and the maniacal alcalde had risen up to pursue his wife. But Kate, foreseeing what he would do, had stepped silently within the shadow of the garden wall. Looking down the road to the town, and seeing nobody moving, the maniac, for some purpose, went back to the

house. This moment Kate used to recover the *locanda* with the lady still panting in horror. What was to be done? To think of concealment in this little place was out of the question. The *alcalde* was a man of local power; and it was certain that he would kill his wife on the spot. Kate's generosity would not allow her to have any collusion with this murderous purpose. At Cuzco, the principal convent was ruled by a near relative of the Andalusian; and there she would find shelter. Kate, therefore, saddled her horse rapidly, placed the lady behind, and rode off in the darkness. About five miles out of the town their road was crossed by a torrent, over which they could not hit the bridge. "Forward!" cried the lady; and Kate repeating the word to the horse, the docile creature leaped down into the water. They were all sinking at first; but, having its head free, the horse swam clear of all obstacles through the midnight darkness and scrambled out on the opposite bank.

The two riders were dripping from the shoulders downward. But, seeing a light twinkling from a cottage window, Kate rode up—obtained a little refreshment, and the benefit of a fire from a poor laboring man. From this man she also bought a warm mantle for the lady, who, besides

her torrent bath, was dressed in a light evening robe ; so that, but for the horseman's cloak of Kate, she would have perished. But there was no time to lose. They had already lost two hours from the consequences of their cold bath. Cuzco was still eighteen miles distant; and the alcade's shrewdness would at once divine this to be his wife's mark. They remounted ; very soon the silent night echoed the hoofs of a pursuing rider : and now commenced the most frantic race, in which each party rode as if the whole game of life was staked upon the issue. The pace was killing ; and Kate has delivered it as her opinion, in the memoirs that she wrote, that the alcalde was the better mounted. This may be doubted ; and certainly Kate had ridden too many years in the Spanish cavalry to have any fear of his worship's horsemanship ; but it was a prodigious disadvantage that *her* horse had to carry double ; while the horse ridden by her opponent was one of those belonging to the murdered Don Antonio, and known to Kate as a powerful animal. At length they had come within three miles of Cuzco. The road after this descended the whole way to the city, and in some places rapidly, so as to require a cool rider. Suddenly a deep trench appeared, traversing the whole extent of a broad heath. It

was useless to evade it. To have hesitated was to be lost. Kate saw the necessity of clearing it, but doubted much whether her poor exhausted horse, after twenty-one miles of work so severe, had strength for the effort. Kate's maxim, however, which never yet had failed, both figuratively for life and literally for the saddle, was, to ride at everything that showed a front of resistance. She did so now. Having come upon the trench rather too suddenly, she wheeled round for the advantage of coming upon it more determinately, rode resolutely at it, and gained the opposite bank. The hind feet of her horse were sinking back from the rottenness of the ground ; but the strong supporting bridle hand of Kate carried him forward ; and in ten minutes more they would be in Cuzco. This being seen by the vicious alcalde, who had built great hopes on the trench, he unslung his carabine, pulled up, and fired after the bonny black horse and its bonny fair riders. But this manœuvre would have lost his worship any bet that he might have had depending on this admirable steeple chase. Had I been stakeholder, what a pleasure it would have been, in fifteen minutes from this very vicious shot, to pay into Kate's hands every shilling of the deposits ! I would have listened to no nonsense about referees

or protests. The bullets, says Kate, whistled round the poor clinging lady *en croupe*. Luckily none struck her; but one wounded the horse; and that settled the odds. Kate now planted herself well in her stirrups to enter Cuzco, almost dangerously a winner; for the horse was so maddened by the wound, and the road so steep, that he went like blazes; and it really became difficult for Kate to guide him with any precision through narrow episcopal paths.

Henceforwards the wounded horse required Kate's continued attention; and yet, in the mere luxury of strife, it was impossible for Kate to avoid turning a little in her saddle to see the alcade's performance on this tight rope of the trench. His worship's horsemanship being perhaps rather rusty, and he not perfectly acquainted with his horse, it would have been agreeable to compromise the case by riding round or dismounting. But all *that* was impossible; the job must be done; and I am happy to report, for the reader's satisfaction, the sequel, so far as Kate could attend the performance. Gathering himself up for mischief, the alcalde took a sweep, as if ploughing out the line of some vast encampment or tracing the *pomærium* for some future Rome; then, like thunder and lightning, with

arms flying aloft in the air, down he came upon the trembling trench. But the horse refused the leap ; and, as the only compromise that *his* unlearned brain could suggest, he threw his worship right over his ears, lodging him safely in a sand heap that rose with clouds of dust and screams of birds into the morning air. Kate had now no time to send back her compliments in a musical halloo. The alcalde missed breaking his neck on this occasion very narrowly ; but his neck was of no use to him in twenty minutes more as the reader will soon find. Kate rode right onwards ; and, coming in with a lady behind her, horse bloody, and pace such as no hounds could have lived with, she ought to have made a great sensation in Cuzco. But, unhappily, the people were all in bed.

The steeple chase into Cuzco had been a fine headlong thing, considering the torrent, the trench, the wounded horse, the lovely lady, with her agonizing fears, mounted behind Kate, together with the meek, dovelike dawn ; but the finale crowded together the quickest succession of changes that out of a melodrama can ever have been witnessed. Kate reached the convent in safety ; carried into the cloisters, and delivered like a parcel, the fair Andalusian. But to rouse the servants caused delay ; and, on returning to

the street through the broad gateway of the convent, whom should she face but the alcalde ! How he escaped the trench, who can tell ? He had no time to write memoirs ; his horse was too illiterate ; but he *had* escaped, temper not at all improved by that adventure, and now raised to a hell of malignity by seeing that he had lost his prey. In the morning light he now saw how to use his sword. He attacked Kate with fury. Both were exhausted ; and Kate, besides that she had no personal quarrel with the alcalde, having now accomplished her sole object in saving the lady, would have been glad of a truce. She could with difficulty wield her sword ; and the alcalde had so far the advantage that he wounded Kate severely. That roused her ancient blood. She turned on him now with determination. At that moment in rode two servants of the alcalde, who took part with their master. These odds strengthened Kate's resolution, but weakened her chances. Just then, however, rode in, and ranged himself on Kate's side, the servant of the murdered Don Calderon. In an instant Kate had pushed her sword through the alcalde, who died upon the spot ; in an instant the servant of Calderon had fled ; in an instant the alguazils had come up.

They and the servants of the alcalde pressed

furiously on Kate, who now again was fighting for life. Against such odds she was rapidly losing ground ; when in an instant, on the opposite side of the street, the great gates of the episcopal palace rolled open. Thither it was that Calderon's servant had fled. The bishop and his attendants hurried across. "Senor Caballador," said the bishop, "in the name of the Virgin, I enjoin you to surrender your sword." "My lord," said Kate, "I dare not do it with so many enemies about me." "But I," replied the bishop, "become answerable to the law for your safekeeping." Upon which, with filial reverence, all parties dropped their swords. Kate being severely wounded, the bishop led her into his palace. In an instant came the catastrophe. Kate's discovery could no longer be delayed ; the blood flowed too rapidly ; the wound was in her bosom. She requested a private interview with the bishop. All was known in a moment ; for surgeons and attendants were summoned hastily, and Kate had fainted. The good bishop pitied her and had her attended in his palace ; then removed to a convent ; then to a second at Lima ; and, after many months had passed, his report to the Spanish government at home of all the particulars drew from the King of Spain and from the

pope an order that the nun should be transferred to Spain.

Yes, at length the warrior lady, the blooming cornet, this nun that is so martial, this dragoon that is so lovely, must visit again the home of her childhood, which now for seventeen years she has not seen. All Spain, Portugal, Italy, rang with her adventurers. Spain from north to south, was frantic with desire to behold her fiery child, whose girlish romance, whose patriotic heroism, electrified the national imagination. The King of Spain must kiss his *faithful* daughter, that would not suffer his banner to see dishonor. The pope must kiss his *wandering* daughter, that henceforwards will be a lamb traveling back into the Christian fold. Potentates so great as these, when *they* speak words of love, do not speak in vain. All was forgiven—the sacrilege, the bloodshed, the flight, and the scorn of St. Peter's keys. The pardons were made out, were signed, were sealed; and the chanceries of earth were satisfied.

Ah, what a day of sorrow and of joy was *that* one day, in the first week of November, 1624, when the returning Kate drew near to the shores of Andalusia; when, descending into the ship's barge she was rowed to the piers of Cadiz by

bargemen in the royal liveries; when she saw every ship, street, house, convent, church, crowded, like a day of judgment, with human faces,—with men, with women, with children,—all bending the lights of their flashing and their loving eyes upon herself! Forty myriads of people had gathered in Cadiz alone. All Andalusia had turned out to receive her. Ah, what joy, if she had not looked back to the Andes, to their dreadful summits, and their more dreadful feet! Ah, what sorrow, if she had not been forced, by music, and endless banners, and triumphant clamors, to turn away from the Andes to the joyous shore which she approached!

Upon this shore stood, ready to receive her, in front of all this mighty crowd, the prime minister of Spain, the same Conde Olivarez who but one year before had been so haughty and defying to our haughty and defying Duke of Buckingham.

But a year ago the Prince of Wales was in Spain; and he also was welcomed with triumph and great joy, but not with the hundredth part of that enthusiasm which now met the returning nun, and Olivarez, that had spoken so roughly to the English duke, to *her* “was sweet as summer.” Through endless crowds of festive compatriots he conducted her to the king. The king

folded her in his arms, and could never be satisfied with listening to her. He sent for her continually to his presence; he delighted in her conversation, so new, so natural, so spirited; he settled a pension upon her at that time, of unprecedented amount in the case of a subaltern officer; and by *his* desire, because the year 1625 was a year of jubilee, she departed in a few months from Madrid to Rome. She went through Barcelona, there and every where welcomed as the lady whom the king delighted to honor. She traveled to Rome; and all doors flew open to receive her. She was presented to his holiness, with letters from his most Catholic majesty. But letters there needed none. The pope admired her as much as all before had done. He caused her to recite all her adventures; and what he loved most in her account was the sincere and sorrowing spirit in which she described herself as neither better nor worse than she had been. Neither proud was Kate, nor sycophantishly and falsely humble. Urban VIII. it was that then filled the chair of St. Peter. He did not neglect to raise his daughter's thoughts from earthly things; he pointed her eyes to the clouds that were above the dome of St. Peter's Cathedral; he told her, what the cathedral had told her in the gorgeous

clouds of the Andes and the vesper lights, how sweet a thing, how divine a thing, it was, for Christ's sake, to forgive all injuries, and how he trusted that no more she would think of blood-shed. He also said two words to her in Latin, which, if I had time to repeat a Spanish bishop's remark to Kate some time afterwards upon these two mysterious words, with Kate's most natural and ingenuous answer to the bishop upon what she supposed to be their meaning, would make the reader smile not less than they made myself. You know that Kate *did* understand a little Latin, which probably had not been much improved by riding in the Light Dragoons. I must find time, however, whether the press and the compositors are in a fury or not, to mention that the pope, in his farewell audience to his dear daughter, whom he was to see no more, gave her a general license to wear henceforth in all countries, even *in partibus infidelium*, a cavalry officer's dress—boots, spurs, sabre, and sabre tache; in fact, any thing that she and the Horse Guards might agree upon. Consequently, reader, remember for your life never to say one word, nor suffer any tailor to say one word, against those Wellington trousers made in the chestnut forest; for, understand that the Papal indulgence, as to this point, runs back-

wards as well as forwards ; it is equally shocking and heretical to murmur against trousers in the forgotten rear or against trousers yet to come.

From Rome, Kate returned to Spain. She even went to St. Sebastian's, to the city, but—whether it was that her heart failed her or not—never to the convent. She roamed up and down ; every where she was welcome, every where an honored guest, but every where restless. The poor and humble never ceased from their admiration of her ; and amongst the rich and aristocratic of Spain, with the king at their head, Kate found especial love from two classes of men. The cardinals and bishops all doted upon her, as their daughter that was returning. The military men all doted upon her, as their sister that was retiring.

Some time or other, when I am allowed more elbow room, I will tell you why it is that I myself love this Kate. Now, at this moment, when it is necessary for me to close, if I allow you one question before laying down my pen,—if I say “Come, now, be quick ; ask anything you *have* to ask ; for in one minute I am going to write *Finis*, after which (unless the queen wished it) I could not add a syllable,”—twenty to one, I guess

what your question will be. You will ask me, What became of Kate? What was her end?

Ah, reader! but, if I answer that question, you will say I have *not* answered it. If I tell you that secret, you will say that the secret is still hidden. Yet, because I have promised, and because you will be angry if I do not, let me do my best; and bad is the best. After ten years of restlessness in Spain, with thoughts always turning back to the Andes, Kate heard of an expedition on the point of sailing to Spanish America. All soldiers knew *her*, so that she had information of every thing that stirred in camps. Men of the highest military rank were going out with the expedition; but they all loved Kate as a sister, and were delighted to hear that she would join their mess on board ship. This ship, with others, sailed, whither finally bound I really forget; but, on reaching America, all the expedition touched at *Vera Cruz*. Thither a great crowd of the military went on shore; the leading officers made a separate party for the same purpose. Their intention was to have a gay, happy dinner, after their long confinement to a ship, at the chief hotel; and happy in perfection it could not be unless Kate would consent to join it. She, that was ever kind to brother soldiers,

agreed to do so. She descended into the boat along with them, and in twenty minutes the boat touched the shore. All the bevy of gay, laughing officers, junior and senior, like schoolboys escaping from school, jumped on shore, and walked hastily, as their time was limited, up to the hotel. Arriving there, all turned round in eagerness, saying, “Where is our dear Kate?” Ah, yes, my dear Kate, at that solemn moment, where, indeed, were *you*? She had *certainly* taken her seat in the boat—that was sure. Nobody, in the general confusion, was certain of having seen her on coming ashore. The sea was searched for her—the forests were ransacked. The sea made no answer—the forests gave no sign. I have a conjecture of my own; but her brother soldiers were lost in sorrow and confusion, and could never arrive even at a conjecture.

That happened two hundred and fourteen years ago. Here is the brief sum of all: This nun sailed from Spain to Peru; and she found no rest for the sole of her foot. This nun sailed back from Peru to Spain; and she found no rest for the agitations of her heart. This nun sailed again from Spain to America; and she found—the rest which all of us find. But where it was could never be made known to the father of Spanish camps that sat in

Madrid, nor to Kate's spiritual father that sat in Rome. Known it is to the great Father that once whispered to Kate on the Andes ; but else it has been a secret for two centuries ; and to man it remains a secret forever and ever.

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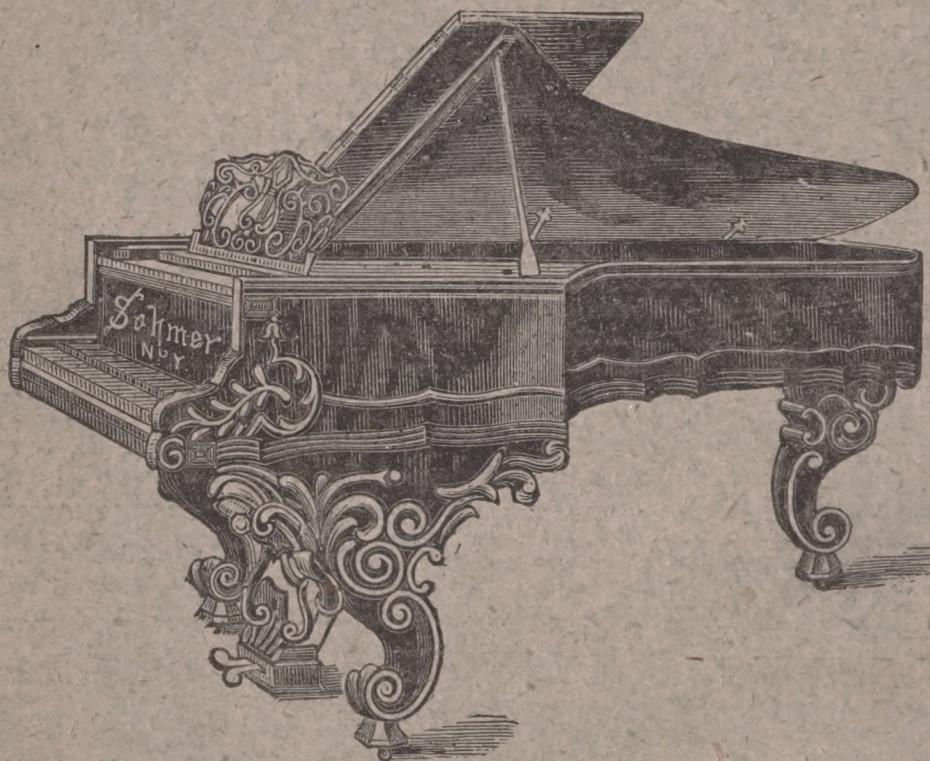
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